

Walford Nursery & Primary School
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Thursday, 4th June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to start by extending a huge thank you for supporting your children so well in their home-learning over the past twelve weeks. In addition, the whole school team are heartened by your messages of support and your kind words of encouragement and understanding of our position during these difficult times.

As you are aware, last week, I took the decision to delay the implementation of Walford's Wider Re-Start Strategy. In order to move to a position of greater confidence regarding our local context, I have continued to liaise with Herefordshire County Council senior officers and Public Health, as well as local health and social care professionals.

I have been assured that locally, contact tracing is now more available and, therefore, I have greater confidence knowing that any potential outbreak could be managed both proactively and swiftly. Over the past week, Herefordshire County Council Public Health has evidenced that the number of confirmed cases within the county has decreased (on average, one new diagnosis per day).

Although I still believe that we should take a cautious approach, I am confident that with all of our Risk Assessments in place, which have been approved by Herefordshire County Council, and the current information regarding our local context, Walford is now in a position to welcome the priority groups back into school, steadily. **Therefore, Walford will open its doors to priority groups (Nursery, Year R, Year 1 and Year 6), alongside our Key Worker/vulnerable children on Monday, 8th June.** Once again, please be assured that I have not taken this decision lightly and, of the governors present in today's strategy meeting, there was unanimous support.

Whilst we are very much looking forward to seeing more of our Walford family back in school again, we would like to reassure you that the safety of the whole school community continues to be our priority. It is important to note that whilst we will actively encourage every child to adopt social distancing measures, it cannot be guaranteed, particularly for younger children as it is contrary to all of their previous experiences of school. That said, we will apply the following hierarchy of measures, set out in the DfE guidance:

- avoiding contact with anyone with coronavirus symptoms;
- frequent hand washing and good respiratory hygiene practices;
- regular deep cleaning of setting;
- minimising contact and mixing with others.



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In addition, we would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the preventative measures the school has put in place in order to minimise the spread of infection. Please refer to Walford's revised Behaviour Policy COVID-19 Addendum and Home-School Agreement which you should ensure that you talk through with your child(ren) before they return to school.

Children in Nursery, Year R, Year 1 and Year 6 will return to school in much smaller classes that we are now calling, 'bubbles.' Children and staff, within a 'bubble', will stay together throughout the day and will be encouraged to socially distance away from each other through a revised desk arrangement, staggered start and end times, as well as playtimes and close supervision when moving around the school, including when toileting and hand-washing. A small number of adults will be associated with a 'bubble' of children. Each 'bubble' of children and staff will be kept socially distant from other 'bubbles' of children and staff throughout the school day.

It is important to note that Key Worker/vulnerable children will not necessarily be in a 'bubble' with their usual class teacher. We have, however, tried to carefully factor in transition arrangements where possible, so, if children are not in a 'bubble' with their current class teacher, they may be with the teacher they will move to in September 2020. Please refer to the timetable attached for specific information regarding your child(ren).

The start and end of the school day will be staggered, with 'bubbles' of children arriving at different times and in different places (every parent/carer will receive individual Drop Off and Pick Up arrangements). It is important that pupils arrive promptly for their allocated time and are not brought to school earlier or later than stipulated. Only one adult should escort a child to school and collect a child from school each day. Staff will be assisting both children and parents/carers during these times.

All children will enter and exit the school via classroom Fire Doors to ensure that movement within Walford's very narrow corridors is reduced significantly. A one-way system will be also be used to minimise movement.

A school day is now run very differently from how it was before children left on Friday, 20th March. On your child's return to school, there will be a big focus on health and well-being and helping children to cope with the recent changes in their lives. If your child(ren) requires specific support in terms of coping with a recent bereavement, is struggling with the lack of physical contact with extended family members or is finding it particularly hard to cope with the changes in their lives since the coronavirus outbreak, please inform class teachers, via email, and we will do everything we can to provide additional support. It is important to note that Walford's home-learning provision will continue, however, teacher response times will be affected by their teaching role in the wider re-start opening for priority groups.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the whole team for their incredible dedication, commitment and continued support for every child and their wider family throughout these extremely challenging times.

Yours sincerely

Ms L. George
Headteacher



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