



22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

## Proposed Phased Reopening of Schools for children in Foundation 2, Year 1 and Year 6

Dear Parents and Carers

I continue to prepare with the staff at both Somerville Nursery School and Somerville Primary School for the possible reopening to specific year groups as stated by the Prime Minister. Many thanks for those who completed the original survey which I sent out last week and the summary results of which are on the school website (Will your child return on 1<sup>st</sup> June?: 36.4% Yes, 32.7% Maybe, 25.2% No). I would just like to thank all 214 of you who completed the survey. A similar but much shorter survey is now available for completion at the bottom of this letter to understand whether your child will or will not be returning on the proposed first day. This new survey will only require your child's name, year group and Yes or No. This will help us to prepare the classrooms for your child's possible return. Even if you don't plan to send your child into school can I urge you to complete the survey to help us to plan. Even if you state 'no' initially you may change your mind as more information becomes available and you feel more confident to send your child into school. This letter has been sent to every parent and is available on the Federation website to ensure that you are all kept informed. Further information with regards to opening up to other year groups will be made available as soon as the DFE and government release further guidance.

Please note: If your child is clinically extremely vulnerable, or living with someone who is in this group, they should not come back to school and should continue home learning. If your child is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), you should follow medical advice to decide if they should come back to Nursery. Please refer to government guidelines for further details of these groups. Online learning will continue but may reduce as a consequence of more staff being required in school to teach year groups as they return.

We will be opening the schools in phases to ensure that we have the staffing, space capacity and safety measures in place to open to more children in each phase.

- **Phase 1** from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 will be to increase our childcare provision for our children who need additional support and availability for frontline key workers.
- **Phase 2** will commence from 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020 at the earliest for our Year 6 children.

We will be in touch with you to confirm which phase will be taking place next, which children we plan to open for and when they will be able to return to school whilst risk assessing thoroughly the introduction of the next phase. We will endeavour that we give you enough notice so that you can plan ahead.

We have numerous actions to carry out between now and reopening to the children, however I wanted to share with you as many of the proposed plans for the possible reopening to children of these year groups so that you can make a more informed decision of returning your child to school when we confirm your child's age group can return. When we are in a position to give you more information, rest assured we will.

- A risk assessment of all areas has been written and shared with the governors and the local authority for the reopening of the school.
- Children of key workers and those who need additional support of other year groups will continue to be accommodated in the childcare provision, however this provision be reviewed weekly due to limited staff numbers and space available. Most staff will be teaching the children returning to school and a number of staff are currently self-isolating and will not be returning to school at the moment.
- Key worker children must continue to book in weekly for their childcare provision. Any children not booking in advance will unfortunately be asked to return the following week once they have booked a place due to limited staffing capacity during this return to school phase.
- Any new requests from key workers for the childcare provision will be considered on a priority basis due to limited staffing and space in the school.
- Children returning to school in the proposed year groups F1, F2, Y1 and Y6 will be working in a classroom with two adults and this will be known as a 'bubble' –government term not one that I would choose.
- Children will need to be aware that when they are in their bubble they will not be with all of the children from their class, they may not be in their friendship groups and they may not be with their own class teacher or in their own classroom as this may not be possible.
- Each bubble will not come into contact with children in other bubbles during the school day.
- A bubble will contain no more than 15 children, but on average we envisage a bubble to contain an average of 10 children at the Primary School.
- Routines will be unfamiliar and more formal than usual. They will however, be well cared for and welcomed by the adult who is working with them.
- The behaviour policy will be updated in line with new guidelines and my expectations of their behaviour to ensure that children follow the routines such as handwashing and to ensure that children socially distance as far as possible as well as reducing any risk to your child and the staff in school.
- Children will be expected to arrive at school between 8.45am and 9.05am. Children will be expected to be collected from 3.00pm to 3.20pm. This will ensure that there is minimal adult contact – 2m distancing between adults must be maintained.
- We ask parents and carer politely not to gather at the school gates when arriving or departing. This may prevent other adults and children from entering or leaving the premises.
- Where possible only one adult should accompany children to school, obviously if you have several children this may not be possible on your own and we recognise this.
- Arriving after 9.05am to school will not be acceptable unless there are exceptional circumstances. Similarly it will not be acceptable to collect your child during the school day, or early unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Anyone unable to adhere to the timings of the day should consider continuing with home learning until they can maintain the set times.
- Children can wear any suitable clothing (leisure clothing) for school and you may choose to send them in their school uniform (if it still fits!) but we would ask that whatever they wear it should ideally be loose fitting and it must be clean clothes each day to reduce the possible risk of transmission to yourselves and to other children and staff.
- All children will be provided a water bottle and a school packed lunch to reduce the amount of belongings being brought into school from home into their bubble. Gluten free lunches will also be accommodated where required. If your child has a very specific diet that we may be unable to accommodate then this is an exceptional circumstance. Your child's health is paramount.
- We ask that children do not bring in any personal belongings, mobile phones, pencil cases etc we do not envisage that they will need any of these items when in school.
- Soft, wooden toys and soft furnishings have been removed from the school classrooms.
- Children will be expected to wash their hands for 20 seconds at regular intervals during the school day as well as before and after lunch and after visiting the toilet.
- Children may spend more time outdoors than usual and therefore they will need to bring a warm coat with them each day. In most cases these will be kept on the back of chairs or folded under their table. According to the weather, please also consider applying sun cream before school.
- Breaks will be given to the children throughout the day and these will be on a rota basis and in a specific area of the outdoor area to reduce possible contact with other children. Outdoor areas will be split into zones.

- Corridors will be split in two as far as possible and a one way system will be in place for children to visit the designated toilet for their bubble. Those in Foundation 2 will be able to access the toilet in their classroom or next to their classroom. Adults will supervise children on their way to and from the toilets to reduce the possible risk of coming into contact with other children.
- The Government suggests that social distancing will not be possible within a school setting and we would offer no guarantee that we would be able to keep your children socially distant, despite our best endeavours.
- Collecting children at the end of the school day from 3.00pm to 3.20pm. There will be specific zones on the playground for you to wait for you to collect your child. When collecting other children from other zones we ask that you remain socially distant from other parents and their children.
- If you need to speak to a member of school staff this will not be possible at the classroom door to minimise contact. Please instead telephone the school office to make arrangements for the member of staff to telephone you at a mutually convenient time.
- If you need to speak to someone in the school office, please telephone or email [schooloffice@somerville.wirral.sch.uk](mailto:schooloffice@somerville.wirral.sch.uk) only 1 adult at a time will be allowed entry to the front entrance. The door will need to be closed behind you and other adults will need to wait outside until the person currently in the entrance exits the building. 1 in 1 out.
- If your child develops any Coronavirus symptoms (now updated to include loss of or change to taste and smell) you must inform the school immediately and they must be tested (pending updated government guidance for the age of the child) and must not attend school for 14 days.
- If the child lives with someone who develops symptoms they should not attend school for 14 days and you must inform school immediately so that we can inform other parents to be vigilant.
- Anyone suspected of having symptoms in school will be isolated from the rest of the bubble until a parent collects the child. All children and staff in the bubble will also be sent home and will be asked to isolate for 14 days or until the tested child tests negative. All parents of children in the bubble will be updated on the progress of the child's test whether positive or negative. If a child tests negative the bubble will reopen to children and staff on the next available school day.
- Families must continue to observe the current social distancing guidance out of school and so must not mix with other households.

I know that many of you will be anxious to get back to work but many of you will be worried about sending your child back to school. Staff at Somerville share your anxieties for their own children and families. Wirral schools will do everything they can to respond to the guidance given by the government but will also be ensuring that we do this safely. If you feel the time is not right for your children to return, that is your choice. There is no compulsory education at the moment, and parents will not be penalised in any way for choosing to keep their children at home for a little longer. If you feel the time is not right for your children to return, that is your choice however when you feel that the time is right all I would ask is that you can notify the school in advance by contacting the school office so that we can make preparations.

You may have already seen on the news and other media that there are currently disputes between unions, the DfE and the scientific advisors, they will be working at local level and national level to resolve these. Until then, the date of June 8<sup>th</sup> for Phase 2 is not confirmed but nevertheless, I wanted to share what the plans are for children at Somerville so that you can make an informed decision once the government state a definite return date. I know that you will possibly have more questions but hopefully this letter has answered many that you had.

We look forward to welcoming the children back to school when the school is able to reopen and will be here for when you decide that you feel the time is right for your child to return.

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS GOOGLE FORM [CLICK HERE](https://forms.gle/TXz3TFHdvEFshABU7). Or type this into your web browser <https://forms.gle/TXz3TFHdvEFshABU7>

With regards

Mr M J Forber  
Executive Headteacher

“Aiming High Together”