



Abel Smith
School Established
1861

Abel Smith School
Churchfields, Greencoates, Hertford
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Headteacher: Mr Daniel Hewitt

Saturday, 23 May 2020

Dear parents,

Re-opening of school

The past few months have been difficult for everyone, but whilst everyone in our community has played their part, the one thing that has been missing is having all the children back at school. Whilst school has been closed to the majority of children, we have continued to open for key worker families and vulnerable children. We are immensely proud of the team at Abel Smith. They have given freely of their time and worked when they haven't needed to, and this is because they care deeply about our school. We are lucky to have such a dedicated and loyal team. They deserve our thanks and the thanks of the whole school community.

Opening is dependent on the government's five tests being met. If these tests are not met, plans will change. Unfortunately, we will only be given 48 hours' notice of any changes and you are likely to hear about these changes at the same time as we do.

Whilst the government has issued guidance for school, there is still a lot of uncertainty. Scientific evidence is yet to be released that establishes if the measures contained within the Department of Education guidance are capable of ensuring the risk to pupils, staff and the wider community is reduced to an acceptable level. We believe it is important you fully understand the potential liability we are all exposing ourselves to by following the current guidance. This is why our approach will be cautious, measured and phased.

Our plan is to return pupils gradually by ensuring the number of children is reduced and controlled. We will be taking the following steps to ensure effective measure are in place to protect everyone:

- School will be closed to all pupils over half term. This is to allow for cleaning and for furniture, toys and small equipment to be removed and stored
- All entrances into school will be controlled
- Classrooms will be limited to 10 children
- Children will be placed into groups of 10 (referred to as a bubble) within their year group and children will remain in these bubbles. Bubbles will be allocated and non-negotiable.
- Bubbles will not mix at any point.
- Start and finish times will be allocated and staggered. Times will be non-negotiable.
- Breaks and lunch times will be staggered
- Increased hand washing
- Regular cleaning throughout the school day
- Staff will be wearing personal protective equipment

Our priority still remains to provide child care for key workers and vulnerable pupils. Along with this priority we are phasing the return of pupils in year 6, year 1 and reception over a three-week period, starting with year 6. The attached timetable outlines this phased return. The return of children in pre-school, Nursery and years 2 to 5 will depend upon Government guidance.

If you are in the key worker or vulnerable child group, you will need to decide if your child is to remain in the key worker bubble or join the class bubble. If you remain in the key worker bubble you will be able to continue to choose the days you send your child to school (all five days, except the 1st June). However, if you would like your child to join the class bubble, you will limit your child's attendance to three days

(Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday). Once your child has started school in this bubble, this cannot be changed.

The Hertford, Ware & Villages Primary Schools have a close working relationship and support each other in many ways. We have already worked together, extensively, on the issue of re-opening. All local heads are mindful of the anxieties that many in our community will have, as well as recognising the need for our pupils to be back in school. All local schools are in agreement that there is a need to be cautious with any plan to re-introduce pupils and staff to school. Whilst each school's plan will differ depending upon that school's staffing and site circumstances, our aim is to bring children back into school as safely as possible, and therefore, all schools will be organising this on a part time basis.

At the end of this letter you will find a [link](#) to a form that we are asking you to complete (one per child). It will provide us with vital information to enable us to plan effectively for the re-opening of school. **IF YOU DO NOT COMPLETE THIS FORM WE WILL ASSUME THAT YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE RETURNING TO SCHOOL BEFORE SEPTEMBER. The form will close on Tuesday 26th May 2020 at 23:00.**

We have spent a great deal of time formulating a safe and phased re-opening of school. It is a model that is sustainable as we welcome more year groups into school, whilst maintaining our high quality home learning for those pupils not in school. We hope you appreciate that we cannot make any exceptions at all due to personal circumstances.

If you have any additional questions, please email: support@abelsmith.herts.sch.uk

As always, keep safe, look after your families and those most in need.

Yours faithfully

Mr Daniel Hewitt
Headteacher

Mrs Katy Kay
Chair of Governors

Attached:

1. [Opening timetable](#)
2. [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
3. [Link to the re-opening of school form \(one per child\)](#)

Click / Tap here to
see opening
timetable

Click / Tap here to
see FAQ's

Click / Tap here to
open the re-opening
of school form.

Opening of school

Below is the time table of how Abel Smith will phase the reopening of school, should the government measures be met. It has been organised in this way for the following reasons:

1. The impact can be reviewed before we open to more children
2. Key worker and vulnerable children remain the school priority. If this number increases, then we will have to review the impact on staffing levels.
3. The need to continue to provide online learning for the whole school.

Half Term	School closed	Cleaning and reorganisation		
Week 1 (week beginning 1st June 2020)				
01/06/20	School closed	Staff briefing, planning and preparation (Closed to all pupils)		
02/06/20	School open	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority)	Year 6 Three groups of 10	
03/06/20	School open	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority)	Year 6 Three groups of 10	
04/06/20	School open	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority)	Year 6 Three groups of 10	
05/06/20	School Closed	Cleaning and planning and preparation	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority) - OPEN	

Week 2 (week beginning 8th June 2020)				
08/06/20	School closed	Staff briefing, planning and preparation	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority) - OPEN	
09/06/20	School open	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority)	Year 6 Three groups of 10	Year 1 Three groups of 10
10/06/20	School open	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority)	Year 6 Three groups of 10	Year 1 Three groups of 10
11/06/20	School open	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority)	Year 6 Three groups of 10	Year 1 Three groups of 10
12/06/20	School Closed	Cleaning and planning and preparation	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority) - OPEN	

Week 3 (week beginning 15th June 2020)					
15/06/20	School closed	Staff briefing, planning and preparation	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority) - OPEN		
16/06/20	School open	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority)	Year 6 Three groups of 10	Year 1 Three groups of 10	Reception Three groups of 10
17/06/20	School open	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority)	Year 6 Three groups of 10	Year 1 Three groups of 10	Reception Three groups of 10
18/06/20	School open	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority)	Year 6 Three groups of 10	Year 1 Three groups of 10	Reception Three groups of 10
19/06/20	School Closed	Cleaning and planning and preparation	Key Worker and vulnerable children (Priority) - OPEN		

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the plans for re-opening school to other year groups?

We have a number of provisional plans, which now need to be informed by information from you. The number of children that return to school will impact on the direction of our plans. This wider reopening will be dependent on the success of the first three weeks.

What information does school require at this stage?

There will be a form to complete for all parents, to ascertain how many children will be returning.

Will school re-open to all pupils before the summer holidays?

At this stage school will not reopen to everybody. Our plans currently revolve around reception, year 1 and year 6. Please remember the Government has released a three-stage approach to releasing the lockdown, based on five key tests. If these five-key tests are not met, then the Government's plan will not happen. Unfortunately, the Government will not notify schools until 48 hours before.

What will the school environment be like for those children that return?

The school environment will not be the same. Furniture and other equipment will be limited and movement around the school highly restricted. This is to control any potential spread of the virus and to also manage and maintain our cleaning processes.

Children will be placed into groups of 10 with their year group and these groups will remain fixed and non-negotiable. Breaks and lunchtimes will also take place within these groups and mixing of groups will not be permitted.

Whilst in the classroom, children will not be permitted to wander around and encouraged to remain at their work space. We will make every effort to utilise the outside space, but this will also need to be controlled.

How long will the school day last?

We are aiming to keep the school day much the same as normal. Our plan is to stagger arrival times between 8:30am and 9:15am and finish times between 2:30pm and 3:15pm.

What will my children learn?

We will not be offering a full curriculum but will prioritise elements of English and maths and then focus on the wellbeing side of your child. There are many elements that will need to be addressed and focused on in order to reintegrate your children back to school. Each year group will focus on the tasks set by the class teacher on Seesaw.

Will my child be with their class teacher?

Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that your child will be with their class teacher. If a member of the team becomes ill this will impact on our ability to fulfil our plans.

Will the school continue to provide online learning?

Because of the way we have structured the return to school, we have allocated time to ensure all year groups will continue to be provided with learning activities via Seesaw. Should you decide that the safest place for your child to be is at home, they will continue to receive the same activities as those children at school.

How will school protect my child and the adults?

Firstly, there is no guarantee that we can fully protect your child or the adults from this virus. It is highly contagious.

We will aim to maintain social distancing as much as possible. To support this signs and floor markings will be introduced.

Washing of hands will be increased and teachers will be wearing personal protective equipment.

To limit the spread of infection, we are limiting the number of people on site. No parents are allowed on the school premises and we are requesting that you drop off and pick up. No children will be allowed to make their own way home. This is to ensure that social distancing is maintained by a responsible adult.

Will my child need to wear school uniform?

Yes. We are expecting all children who attend school to wear clean school uniform every day.

What equipment will my child need to bring?

We are expecting all children to bring their own equipment (pen, pencil, ruler, eraser, glue stick, set of colouring pencils) in a pencil case that can be wiped down.

Children will need to bring their own water bottle and ensure that is full. Water fountains at school will not be in use.

We will let you know if your child needs any special equipment.

Do I have to send my child to school?

School is **not compulsory** during this period – from **1st June to 17 July 2020**. If you decide not to send your child to school during this period, you will not be fined.

[Click / Tap here to see opening timetable](#)

[Click / Tap here to see FAQ's](#)

[Click / Tap here to open the re-opening of school form.](#)