

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**Re: Coronavirus Covid 19 – FAQs – 29<sup>th</sup> May**

This document will be updated weekly with any additional questions received.

**For Year Six children what sort of work will be done with them towards transition to secondary school? And will any be sent home for those not returning?**

Miss. Roberts will be planning closely with the other Year 6 teachers activities to support transition. These are usually taught every year and include learning about making new friends, managing and organising themselves and coping with change. The same work will be able to be accessed via the school website for children not returning to school.

**Do the children coming back need to wear uniform or is it own clothes?**

Children will now to wear school uniform as we are coming back to school. However, the expectations will be slightly more relaxed than usual so that if children have grown out of their uniform you don't need to buy more just for the last 7 weeks. They can wear other clothes (which you don't mind getting dirty!) if you do not have enough or any school uniform that fits. Please can children wear sensible shoes, ideally trainers because for outdoor activities, such as PE and Forest School, the children won't be changing in and out of clothes or shoes. Trainers don't have to be black this term – any colour will be ok so you don't need to go out and buy black trainers if you haven't got any. Government guidance advises parents to send their children in clean clothes every day to support good hygiene practices.

**The Nursery hours aren't long enough. I understand about the children not being able to have lunch but 2.5 hour slots make it impossible for me to work.**

We are following Government guidance and can only offer morning or afternoon sessions for children to support social distancing and allow staff to clean the Nursery between sessions. We are also only able to offer places to a certain number of children as we cannot go over the recommended numbers of children.

**Will the bubbles include key worker children or will they be kept separate?**

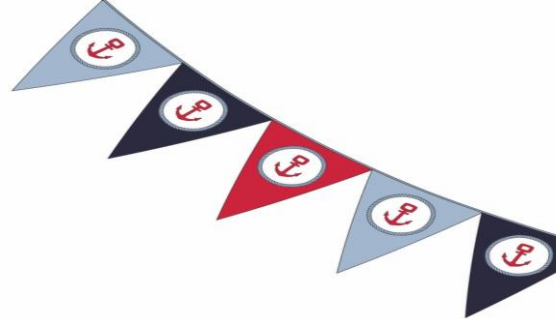
Keyworker children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 will be part of the year group bubbles so that they can be with the teachers and their friends.

**With 15 kids and 2 adults in a classroom are the school actively preparing classrooms to try to maintain a 2m distance? E.g. seating plan, table and chairs for reception kids or if we them do we have to accept that this will not be something they will be focusing on?**

We are organising classrooms to maximise the space between children to support an element of social distancing, however our classrooms are not big enough to support 2m distance between all children and adults. However we are following Government guidance about following the recommended hierarchy of measures:

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*"We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to early years and schools, we are taking this into account. Schools should therefore work through the hierarchy of measures set out above:*

- *avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms*
- *frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices*
- *regular cleaning of settings*
- *minimising contact and mixing*

*It is still important to reduce contact between people as much as possible, and we can achieve that and reduce transmission risk by ensuring children, young people and staff where possible, only mix in a small, consistent group and that small group stays away from other people and groups.*

*Public Health England (PHE) is clear that if early years settings, schools and colleges do this, and crucially if they are also applying regular hand cleaning, hygiene and cleaning measures and handling potential cases of the virus as per the advice, then the risk of transmission will be lowered."*

**If Government start making plans for other years to return there's not enough classrooms for the bubble, especially for 3 form years.**

That's correct. If the Government starts making plans for other years to return and have the same expectations as now, then we do not have enough space to support opening the school safely for other year groups. We will be guided by the Government on this matter as well as looking at the capacity of the school.

**As I understood the children going back won't be following the school curriculum and will be focusing on body health and well-being, will these work sheets still be sent home for those that choose not to send children back to school?**

There will still be elements of the curriculum taught, including reading, writing and maths albeit under theme of Healthy Bodies and Healthy Minds. All the work that the children will receive in school will still be able to be accessed via the school app and website.

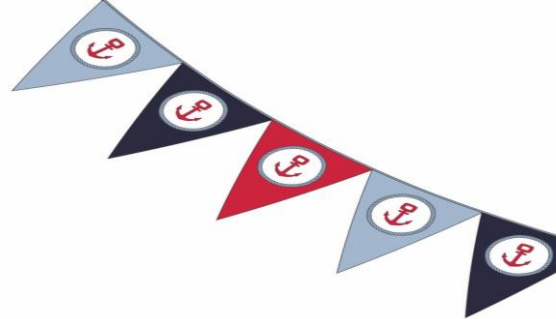
**If we have children in different years where should we be waiting to make sure we can do the drop off times and not get in the way? Or are we to wait out the front? Can Year 6 still come in unsupervised or do you require adults to drop them off?**

At drop off time, there won't be an area to wait and you will need to exit and then come back in to drop off other children. We will continue to review these arrangements to ensure we can support everyone as best we can but this is something new for us to sort out. At collection times, there will be coned off areas for parents to wait to collect their children before exiting via the one-way system.

**With children leaving Nursery, will there be any way to still visit reception and meet teachers?**

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We won't be able to do this at the moment due to limiting the number of children and adults moving around the school and accessing different spaces. We are looking at how we can support transition for children starting Reception in September via our website.

**Government are saying no tests for under 5s, if nursery children are showing symptoms do they get a test as government is not saying anything.**

I don't know – you will need to speak to NHS 111 about this matter or access Government guidance online.

**Is there any way for a little walk through video to be uploaded like Kaitlin did to show what we're supposed to do – getting anxious about getting it wrong and kids going the wrong way or it all being too different and not knowing teacher to ask – nothing professional or edited – just to help them (and us) prepare**

I have sent out a letter this week with a map and directions to support parents and there will be staff around in the mornings to help everyone whilst we all get used to this new way. I think it is a good idea about the video and I will try to get this organised for next week.

**What reassurances can they give to those of us like myself who are worried their children may pass on the virus to other vulnerable people in their family and/or workplace? Can anyone give some kind of advice as to the risk to them or please recommend where I could go to for advice on this?**

The reassurance I can give to everyone is that the school has followed the guidance, including the hierarchy of measures stated above. I have also written a detail Recovery Plan and risk assessments to support returning to school which the Governors have read. Every parent and carer can make their own decisions about whether or not to return their children based on all the information shared with everyone from the school. The Government website has lots of documents that you can access for further specific advice.

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

**Is the school definitely going to open on the 1<sup>st</sup> June for more than just key worker and vulnerable children?**

Yes – the will open when the Government announces the date

**Do parents need to phone in every day for absence if they are keeping children off because of concerns about safety?**

Yes – we will need parents to do this so that we are able to keep an accurate register and this is in the Government guidance.

**If the children do not attend school, will they still be provided with homework?**

Yes – the children at home will be getting the same work as the children at school.

**If parents decide to initially keep their children at home but feel more secure in a few weeks time, what do they need to do? Does the school need a set amount of notice for their return?**

Parents and carers are able to send their children back to school once they feel more secure – the school is open for everyone in those year groups. We would request at least one full day's notice of your intention to return your child to school so that the teacher can be informed and will be expecting them. Please do not e-

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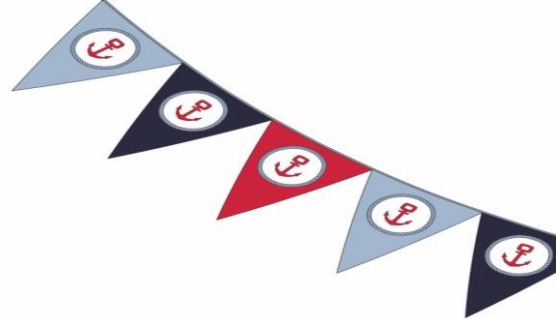
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mail the school in the afternoon or evening requesting a place for the next day as we cannot guarantee this information will be received and passed on in time.

**PGL refunds. Do you have any news about this? Someone said they've looked on the website and the school has to make a claim on the insurance. Has this already been done? Apparently it also says that schools have been kept informed but we haven't heard anything!**

This is something we are continuing to get advice about and Mrs. Hunt (School Business Manager) will contact parents next week with more information about this. Parents will be refunded but the arrangements as to how to do this have yet to be agreed.

**Also, will we receive the £50 deposit back as it was not our fault that it was cancelled?**

This information will be shared with you next week once Mrs. Hunt is back in school.

**Is there any possibility of setting up Zoom meeting lessons?**

Zoom is not recommended for live teaching or using in schools as their site is not completely secure and there have been incidents of inappropriate people gaining access to these online meetings.

We are starting to train teachers on a new system called Loom. Teachers can record themselves sharing some learning with the children and showing them how to complete the learning tasks. We are hoping to have these recordings up and running in June so that children at home can see a teacher explaining the work that they need to complete. These won't be live lessons as these are difficult to achieve safely and not all children may be able to access these. However, these recorded sessions will be able to be accessed at any time to support learning. More information about this will follow soon.

**Lots of people are asking about transition to secondary school. Do you have details of this and how this will work?**

Not at the moment as this is the secondary school's responsibility to organise and run. I know that the secondary schools have been in contact with Miss Roberts and Miss Howell to talk about the children who will be attending in September. Once I know any more, I will let you know. Alternatively, parents can always contact the secondary school directly to find out more about transition arrangements for Year 7 in September.

**Lots of comments and worries that school will be so different and restricted that the children will leave with tainted memories instead of the nice memories of Meridian that they currently have. Is there any way to reassure people?**

Although school will be different I know that Miss Roberts is looking at different fun activities for the children at the end of term that they can do whilst also keeping them safe. They will still have autograph books to create memories and we will be sending out information about how to buy the hoodies with their names on next week. We will do everything we can to make sure their last few weeks at primary school as positive as possible.

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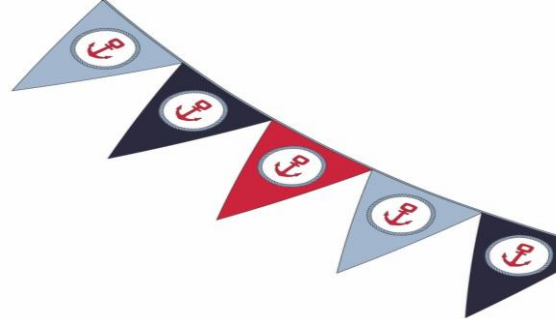
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**Can the teachers send out a video of what the classroom will look like, where they will sit, what equipment they'll have, what will happen at playtime and lunchtime etc? Could you send something similar to the video Miss Duffy has done for the new reception?**

The teachers won't have time to do videos as well as get classrooms ready and plan for the return of the children. The classrooms won't be vastly different to usual and part of the planning to welcome children back will be to support them getting used to new classrooms and new routines.

**Do you have any information about leavers jumpers? If not who do we need to ask?**

A letter about leavers hoodies will be going out next week.

**How is the school going to manage when all the year groups go back? Surely there won't be enough classrooms to split all the year groups up and what about staff?**

You are right – there won't be enough classrooms or staff to increase the number of year groups coming back based on this Government guidance. So, if there is no change to the expectations of school, we won't be able to welcome back any more year groups in June or July.

**What if you have several children at school. If my 4 went back, that's 60 children that they are sharing in 'bubbles' with between them. How is that safe?**

The school is following Government guidance for minimising risk and keeping children safe. Parents are encouraged to follow strict hygiene rules at home too, such as washing hands and wearing clean clothes to school every day.

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**Will teachers and children need to wear a mask?**

The Government guidance states that children and teachers do not need to wear masks. However, if any members of staff wish to wear cloth masks to feel safe when the school is re-opened, I have agreed to this. Equally if any child wishes to wear a cloth mask to support with any anxieties or worries, they are welcome to do so. However, please note, all children who wear masks will need to be able to manage these independently as staff will not be able to support them with taking these off and putting them on.

Government guidance: *"Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended. Face coverings may be beneficial for short periods indoors where there is a risk of close social contact with people you do not usually meet and where social distancing and other measures cannot be maintained, for example on public transport or in some shops. This does not apply to schools or other education settings. Schools and other education or childcare settings should therefore not require staff, children and learners to wear face coverings. Changing habits, cleaning and hygiene are effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus. Face coverings (or any form of medical mask where instructed to be used for specific clinical reasons) should not be worn in any circumstance by those who may not be able to handle them as directed (for example, young children or those with special educational needs or disabilities) as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission"*

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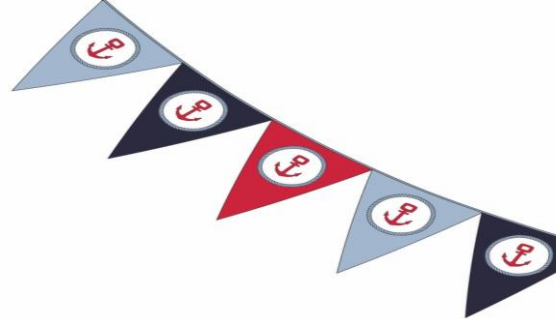
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**What happens when dropping off and picking up as its very crowded?**

We will be staggering drop off and pick up times. There will be social distancing signs on the floor and around the school site. We will also be operating a one-way system to minimise contact with other parents/carers. The back gate accessed via Cripps Avenue will be closed until further notice. The car park will not be available for parents to access, including those with disabled badges. Further information will be sent out before the school reopens, including a map to show the one system and drop off/pick up arrangements.

**If our children need help with going to the loo or getting dressed what happens?**

Children will still be supported going to the toilet if needed and there will be restrictions of the numbers of children able to access the toilets at any one time. Staff will wear protective face coverings, aprons and gloves when changing nappies or dealing with toileting accidents. We won't be asking the children to change during the school day to support the issue of helping getting dressed/undressed. If any adult helps a child in close contact children and adults will then make sure that they wash their hands thoroughly afterwards.

**What happens if a child needs comforting or a hug during the day?**

All adults will continue to support children if they get upset or anxious – we are committed to doing that. In terms of hugs, this will be down to professional decision on part of the adults in the teaching groups as I am sure you will appreciate that some adults are worried about managing social distancing during these times. If any physical contact happens, children and adults will wash hands afterwards.

**How many children will be in one class?**

We will be following strict Government guidance of no more than 15 children per teaching group. Each teaching group will have a designated classroom that will be their base.

**What happens at play time?**

The playgrounds and fields will be divided up into zones and each teaching group will be allocated a section (which will rotate) to play in with only the children in their teaching groups and the adults in their teaching groups.

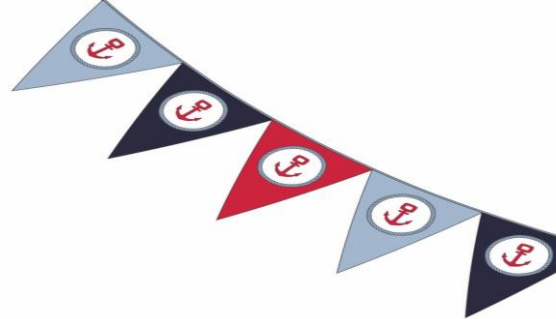
**I currently receive food vouchers. Will this continue as I presume no school meals will be provided so us single parents still have to provide for our child?**

At the moment the Government is saying that for children eligible for benefits-related free school meals will continue to receive food vouchers if they are not attending school. For these children attending school, the kitchen will re-open and be offering hot meals. These hot meals will also be available for any child to order. Also, the Universal Infant Free School Meals will be reinstated for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children.

**Are you expecting to have the children back full time 5 days a week?**

Yes. The Government has asked schools to reopen for education as normal and no longer offer childcare as has happened during the current partial opening.





**If I was to decide I didn't want to send her back until I am 100% safe or I don't send her back straight away and then think she should go?**

The Government is encouraging all those children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to come back to school when we re-open. Obviously it is a parental decision and we will support you in the decision you make. If once you have heard about the plans and make a decision to restart your child after the official opening time, you will be welcome to send them in. We would just ask that you let us know in advance of this so that we can ensure the teacher knows and can prepare for a new child to join.

**If I was to decide I didn't want to send her back until I am 100% certain it's safe would I have to contact the school every day?**

Yes. The expectations remain the same as usual for children not attending school. If your child is in Reception, Year 1, Year 6 or are attending as Critical Keyworker children/vulnerable children and you are keeping your child at home, then we would need to know about this absence. You can leave a message on the voicemail facility via the school office.

**How will the cleaning be monitored for each child after they have used the toilet?**

All children will be accompanied to the toilet to ensure there are a minimum number of children using this space at any one time. Adults will wait outside. Hands will be washed afterwards. If there is an accident, then EMCOR team will clean. Additional cleaning has been set up with EMCOR for during the school day, including the toilets.

**How will you keep the social distancing in place during lunch and break as my child does not fully understand why she will not be able to play with her friends like before?**

Play time and lunch times will be zoned so children will only be playing with their friends in their smaller teaching groups. One of our jobs as teachers will be to help children understand why this is in place in an age appropriate way.

**Will there be any support to have the transition week or day at secondary school given they are closed or will there be small groups able to go in etc?**

I am unsure what secondary schools are planning, although it seems unlikely that they will be offering visits during this time. If I hear any more about this, I will let you know. A large part of the learning planned for Year 6 children in term 6 will be about supporting them with preparing for the transition to secondary school.

**PGL – it is very clear that the trip won't be going ahead. So what are the arrangements made for us to receive the full refund before the children finish their Year 6 and leave the school?**

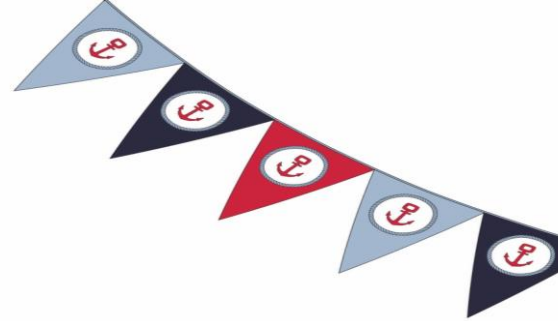
We are waiting to hearing from PGL about arrangements for refunds as they hold the money – the school doesn't. As soon as we know more about how you will be refunded, we will contact all Year 6 parents/carers

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I hope this helps with your understanding of school arrangements if the Government asks all schools to re-open on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

I will update this FAQs sheet next Friday if I receive any further questions. If you do have questions, please e-mail me these via [office@meridian.e-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:office@meridian.e-sussex.sch.uk)

Take care and best wishes to everyone

Kind regards

Ms. Claire Westcott  
Headteacher

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