



BROOKSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Headteacher – Mr M Rodgers, Deputy Headteacher – Mr D Orme

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Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you are well and that you and your family remain safe.

Further government guidance has been provided to schools regarding how they should begin to reopen for more pupils as of 1st June and so I would like to share this with you.

The phased reopening of any school, with an increasing number of pupils and staff attending on-site, provides a challenge regarding health and safety. There is a significant level of concern about how schools should reopen and if indeed they should at this point. You may be aware that presently, education unions are challenging the government decision regarding their plan (due to their concerns around safety of children and staff), and have requested to see the scientific advice that has been used as a measure to allow more pupils to attend schools.

In relation to Brookside, I have been planning how I can reopen the school to more pupils, and will follow national guidance, once it has been finalised and agreed, and when I feel it is appropriate and safe to do so. I do understand that many of you will be finding it more difficult as the lockdown and partial closure of school continues. However, the safety of pupils, families and staff must remain the key focus throughout the process.

I cannot at this point tell you what the exact plan is for the phased approach of reopening Brookside, as we are currently assessing all the risks involved. I will also need to agree on any proposals with the governing body first before any plan can be implemented. I also can't tell you when or indeed if your child will return during the summer term. The phased approach I will take will be monitored with care to ensure that safety is the main focus. I am sure you will agree that, the associated risk must be managed appropriately, otherwise the consequences could be severe.

I must also be clear that I cannot guarantee that I can make the school site safe. My staff and I will work hard and as diligently as possible to reduce any risks to pupils contracting the Coronavirus, but the risk still very much remains.

What I can tell you at this point is that any reopening process will be in conjunction with the local authority and government guidelines. To help explain what some of the control measures that will be put in place will be, and to answer some of your questions that you may have, I have attached a question and answer section at the end of this letter.

Best wishes and keep safe,

Mr M Rodgers



Questions and answers about the phased reopening process.

Key questions answered for parents.

1. Will my child be safe in school?

We can't guarantee safety (including social distances measures being adhered to in all circumstances by pupils.) We will take reasonable measures to reduce the risk, however the risk of the coronavirus being present in school (and any public place) will be higher than self isolation/following social distancing guidelines at home.

2. What control measures will you be putting into place, to minimise the risk?

We will follow all government advice, of which a summary is:

- *minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend childcare settings, schools or colleges.*
- *cleaning hands more often than usual – wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.*
- *ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.*
- *cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach.*
- *minimising contact and mixing by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times)*

I will also be instructing all staff and pupils to stay 2 metres apart at all times. However, this is difficult for children, and again, I cannot guarantee that all children will/can do this.

3. What if my child is vulnerable, i.e. medically?

Follow advice from the government. We can support you here and refer you to the latest documentation/guidance.

4. Will my child be offered a place at school?

Following guidance, Brookside will open through a phased approach. Health and safety is the most important process to follow and understand. We will open for children first in EYFS, Y1 and Y6 (plus children of key workers and vulnerable children).

5. My work has asked me to attend on-site now, as a result of the latest announcement. Does this mean my child can come into school now?

No. As mentioned above, the number of children attending school, will be on a phased approach, and determined by the ongoing risk assessment that will be in place. I will only be able to have a certain number of pupils on site, and then will look to increase the number, if the process is successful. I do not want the school to be closed, due to not managing the situation safely and sensibly.



6. If my child is offered a place, will it be for 5 days a week?

Not necessarily. Again it depends on the circumstances. In order to increase the provision for as many pupils as possible/necessary during the phased approach, children may have to attend for 2 or 3 days only per week, to ensure the school site remains as safe as possible for children and staff.

7. Will the school day be the same?

No, it will look a lot different for pupils.

They won't see certain/all staff as they will be in a specific group, and this won't necessarily be with their class teacher.

Their curriculum will be delivered to them in their specific group.

They will only have social interaction (following 2m guidance) within their specific group of people (as advised by the government).

There will be a staggered break and lunchtime, and the school will be sectioned off accordingly.

Resources (including outside play equipment) will be restricted and not shared each day.

8. Will my child receive the same curriculum if they do attend?

No, given the current challenges, your child's education will not be the same as it was before the lockdown. It won't be possible for children to access specialist rooms (e.g. computer suite) as they will be in a designated teaching space. There will be limitations with access to ICT equipment, as resources cannot be shared. We will not be able to follow the school marking policy, as staff will not be able to handle any of the children's books or equipment.

We will of course, continue to make any learning engaging, specific and purposeful.

9. Will staff and pupils be tested for the Coronavirus at any point?

Yes, we will follow the government and Public Health guidance regarding this and follow any self-isolation instructions and school closure decisions.

Please note, that any test will not happen on-site and the requirement will be that you will need to travel to a test centre or arrange for a test to be sent to your house.

10. Do I have to send my child in if offered a place?

No. There will not be any consequences if you decide to keep your child at home.

11. Will we still receive home learning packs?

Possibly, we will do our best to continue to support you as we have done so far during this challenging time.

However, you will understand that staff can't be in school and also provide the same level of work that we have been providing. I assure you though, that we will do our best.

12. Will I be able to drop my child off and come into school to meet with staff if needed?

You will be able to drop and collect pupils as long as you follow social distancing guidelines around the school site. If you need to speak to someone in school then it will need to be over the phone.



13. Will the school open as normal in September?

I don't know. It is difficult to say what the future holds, although I think/predict that there will be some restrictions in place in September. It all depends on how safe the school community is and what the government tell us.

