

Wednesday 3rd June 2020

Dear parents and carers

St Clement & St James road map for phased return

I hope you are well and have been able to enjoy some of the sunshine during the half term. Today we have welcomed back some of our key worker and vulnerable families and are looking forward to welcoming more of you back to school very soon.

I have been very impressed with all the work children have been doing at home and it has been lovely to see examples which we have posted on the website and on Instagram. I know it's been tough for parents trying to work and home-school at the same time so I offer genuine thanks to parents for taking on this very demanding task!

This letter is to explain the school's initial road map to reopening as it stands at present. It is fairly lengthy for which I apologise, but we consider it essential that I am clear and transparent with you so please ensure you read this letter carefully and all the way to the end.

My primary responsibility as Executive Head Teacher is to ensure safety; safety for our staff, safety for our pupils and safety for all our families. This is at the core of our provisional plans for reopening. I cannot guarantee no exposure to the virus in school, but we will do our utmost to mitigate the risks.

I have a duty to explain to you what provision will look like for your child when they come back to school, as it will not be in the form that they are used to. You, as parents, must have a full picture to make an informed decision about whether you choose to return your child to school or not.

What is the current government guidance?

The government has provided some guidance; however, this has been complex and contradictory and has needed a lot of careful consideration in order to develop our risk assessments. We have been working with staff and unions. We have also taken advice from the borough health and safety advisors and worked closely with other local primary schools. We have consulted with school governors and have their full support. You can find the current Government advice adapted for parents [here](#).

We are aiming to set up groups of 10 children which will be led by a qualified teacher and a teaching assistant will be on hand. However, we have several teachers (and teaching assistants) who are shielding or come under the 'clinically vulnerable' category. Since we cannot observe social distancing effectively within the groups, those staff are advised not to come into school. This will leave us with a shortfall in teaching staff. After careful risk assessment, we can open 6 class groups of ten children so there will be a total of up to 60 children in school.

Like many schools in the area we have decided it will be safest not to open school on Fridays. **School will be closed to all children on Fridays except to those of key workers who have no alternative provision.** Closing the school on Friday will give us time to clean it and give teachers time to plan and organise classroom and online learning

What is the situation at the moment?

This week there is no change to the provision we are offering. School remains open only to the children of key workers and those in vulnerable groups with pre-booked places. During this time we are training staff to work within the new guidelines and risks assessments we have developed. The building will need a significant amount of preparation for the proposed return of increased numbers of children.

The government wants nursery and reception classes to open. We are unable to open these classes because too many of the staff in Early Years are not able to attend school. As a result, we have prioritised year one as the first year to return to school.

Which children can return to school?

Key worker and vulnerable children - 2 groups of 10 - KS2 and KS1/EYFS

Start date - ongoing

Lunch will be provided

Times: Monday to Friday - 9:00 to 3:30

Y1 children - 2 groups of 10 - Y1A and Y1B

Start date Monday 8th June

Lunch will be provided

Times: Monday to Thursday - 9:15-1:15

Y6 children - 2 groups of 10 - Y6A and Y6B

Possible start date Monday 15th June

Lunch will be provided

Times: Monday to Thursday - 9:30 to 1:30

What will happen next?

We will be in touch with **Y1** parents this week. Y1 parents will be invited to bring their children back to school on Monday the 8th June. There are 20 places available for Y1 children and these places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Once the classes are full, we are sorry but we won't be able to accept any more children. We cannot guarantee every child will have a place. **You must book a place for your child - parents cannot simply arrive with their child and expect to be admitted to the school site.** If you decide at a later date that you would like to return your child to school please contact us first to see if we can accommodate them.

My child is in N/R/Y2/Y3/Y4/Y5, and I need to go back to work. Can I send my child to school?

No, not at present. School will only be reopening to Y1, Y6, children of key workers and those in vulnerable groups, such as those children with an EHCP.

So what will school be like if my child returns?

It is essential that we are clear that school will not be as normal. This section aims to help you understand what will be in place. Social distancing simply cannot be observed in school. The government acknowledges that this is impossible for schools to implement. Staff have also been advised by the government not to use any PPE such as masks or gloves, unless for first aid or intimate care purposes.

The government guidance suggests that we halve class sizes to fifteen, but also that we have a 2m distance wherever possible between desks. On average, our classrooms, when set up this way, can

accommodate **only ten desks safely per classroom**. To help you to visualise this, please see the photographs below:

Y1 classroom with 2m distancing
(10 spaces)



Y6 classroom with 2m distancing
(10 spaces)



The guidance suggests that one adult stays with the small group at all times in a 'social bubble'. This means it is very possible that your child may not be with their class teacher and may not be in their usual classroom.

Children will be organised into small **teaching/learning groups 'bubbles'**; within their year groups (in groups of no more than ten), and regrettably these groups will not be allowed to mix with other groups. This means that, although your child's friends may be in school, if they are in another group, they will not be allowed to socialise with them. They will have separate breaks and eat separately in their classrooms.

We are limited in the **resources** we can use in school. We are advised to remove all soft furnishings and any toys that cannot be easily cleaned. While we usually encourage sharing, this will not be possible for older children with stationery etc. For our younger children, this will seriously limit the resources they have to play with and use during the day, including reading books.

Children will have their own safe space in each classroom where they can keep their things. Children should bring the bare minimum to school - **no bags or toys**. They should not hang anything up in the cloakroom.



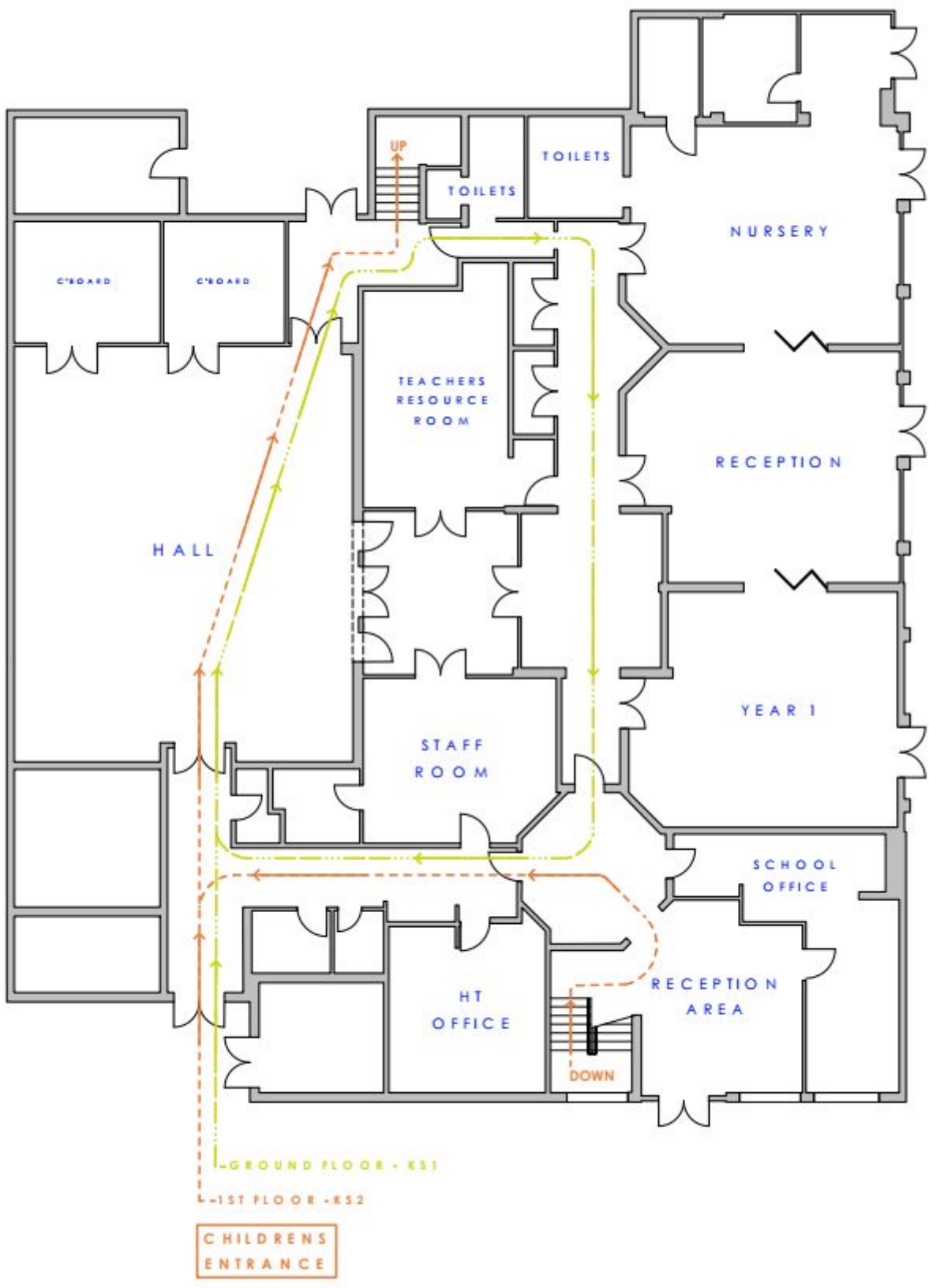
Children will need to bring the following to school:

- A water bottle (water fountains will be closed)
- A sun hat
- School uniform including a jumper/fleece
- Trainers can be worn - we won't change for PE but will be outside getting plenty of exercise
- Packed lunch if needed

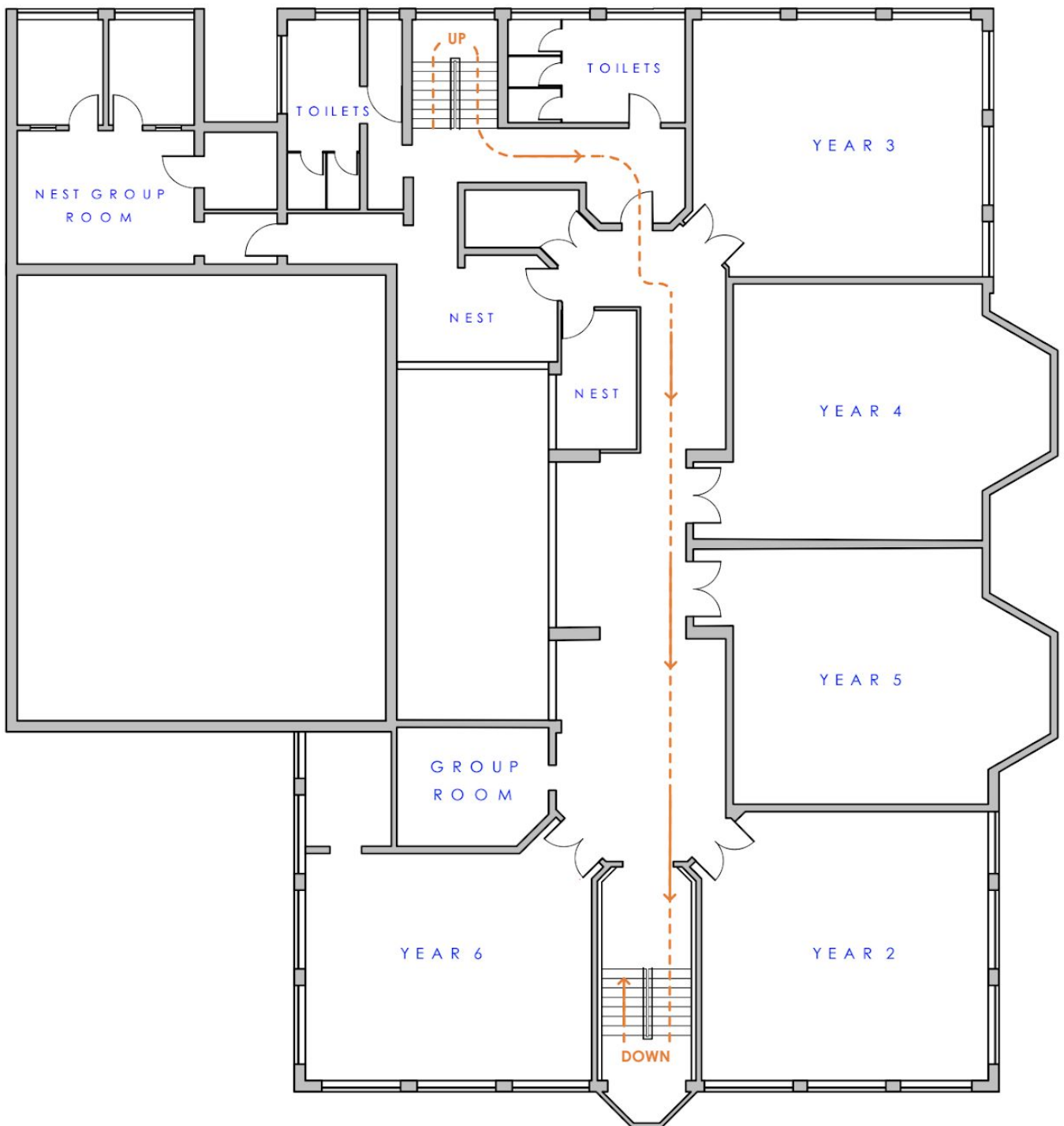
Each class bubble will have a separate area of the **playground** they can play in with equipment that can only be shared in their bubble. We will limit the use of PE equipment and playtime equipment, including the climbing frames.

Movement around the school will be restricted with a one way system in place.

ST CLEMENTS & ST JAMES SCHOOL - GROUND FLOOR -



ST CLEMENTS & ST JAMES SCHOOL - FIRST FLOOR -



The school will operate staggered start and finish times, using the breakfast club doors into the hall. You and your children must arrive at the designated time for all **drop offs and picks ups**.

There are marks 2m apart outside the entrance. Only one parent may accompany their child to school, and social distancing must be observed at all times. Parents should not get together for a group chat outside school after dropping their child off.



Stringent **cleaning and hygiene** practices will remain in place for all adults and children in school. We will teach children about hygiene and ensure they wash their hands 6 times during the day. While we will have hand gel as well, regular hand washing is the most effective way to prevent spread of the virus.

We have amended our **behaviour policy** to include some clear and simple rules around safety. It will be helpful if you read these through with your child so they understand them before they return to school.

Keeping safe in school

We are in this together

We are learning how to do this together

We need to follow the rules in school to keep everyone safe

We will :

- Follow adult instructions immediately
- Ensure we keep the appropriate distance from others
- Stay within our allocated 'bubble' at all times and in our zoned areas at playtime
- Stay at our work stations and touch our resources only when in the classroom
- Wash our hands with soap and hot water thoroughly and frequently
- Keep calm and express ourselves politely

If you do not follow these rules it is not safe for you to be in school and your parents will come to collect you.

In addition to a phased return, teachers will still provide **home learning** for children who stay at home, which will be similar in content to lessons taught in school. Google classrooms will be up and running over the coming week so please look out for a message with your child's log in details and let us know if you are struggling to log in. The Google classrooms will allow learning to be more interactive and give children a chance to respond to their teacher so we can monitor and adapt lessons more effectively.

We are aware that we will not be providing your child with the same learning environment they left on 20th March, but rest assured we will do our best so that they are as happy and as settled as possible.

Can you guarantee my child's safety from the virus at school?

No. We will observe every safety suggestion from government, Public Health England and unions to reduce risk but exposure to the virus is possible - at present, there is a lack of guidance and clarity on transmission from children to adults in the government guidance on this. This has implications for staff and all school families at home, and I will be watching any developments with regard to this very closely.

What will happen if my child or someone in my child's group becomes unwell?

Guidance is that all children showing symptoms should be sent home immediately and self-isolate for seven days, while their household self-isolates for 14 days. This includes having a temperature, presenting with a persistent cough while they are at school or losing their sense of taste or smell. If a temperature is recorded at school, and a child is subsequently sent home, the decision of the school is final and non-negotiable. We will strongly advise a test for COVID-19. If a child tests negative, they can return to school. If a child tests positive, all children and adults from their group will have to self-isolate for 14 days.

To conclude

I am aware that this letter contains a great deal of information and guidance which may sound worrying, but please remember that we are missing all our children and will be delighted to welcome them back into school when it is safe to do so. Please remember that there will be no penalties for non-attendance, should you decide to keep your child at home; we will support your decision. If you choose to return your child, please be assured that we will take every precaution we can for their safety and provide as much fun and quality education as possible.

I will keep you informed through our usual channels. Should there be any change to information or guidance, I will halt reopening plans if I am not satisfied school is safe and we have mitigated any risks as far as we can; please bear in mind all dates are provisional and subject to change.

Until then, please try not to worry or compare us to other schools - every school's situation and solutions will be unique, and we will do what is right for us.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Bouette
Executive Head Teacher



Ellie Dowthwaite
Head of school