



Oakhurst Community First & Nursery
School
*'From Little Acorns Mighty Oaks
Grow'*

22nd May 2020

Dear parents and carers

As we move towards the half term holiday, we just want to thank you for your support during the last nine weeks of home learning. We know you have worked hard to support your children at home despite all the worries and concerns surrounding the public health crisis. We are grateful for all the positive messages we have received about our home learning procedures. Alongside the daily learning, all our staff members have contacted the children at least weekly during the school closure period and there has been much appreciation for this contact.

We recognise, the daily home learning has, at times, been a challenge. Our teachers have worked hard to provide a much slimmer, more accessible set of learning tasks than the children would normally receive during face to face learning, without the availability of the resources we usually have in school. At the beginning, we realised, our normal amount of learning was just too much for the remote learning experience and we quickly adapted and responded to your needs.

As you know, the decision to return to school is being made by the government. It is our job, at school, to implement the government directive. Our school will be following the government guidance as far as reasonably possible to ensure the safety of everyone at school.

The government are saying that schools may be open from 1st June for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 at the earliest, but no final decision has been made on this yet and it will be dependent on what the science and data are saying by the end of next week.

However, we have spent this week preparing for the wider opening so that we are ready for a larger number of children to return if we are told it is safe to do so on Tuesday 2nd June. Today, Nursery (school starters only), Reception and Year 1 children will receive a booklet explaining which class 'bubble' they will be in, who their grown ups will be and which classrooms they will be in. This will hopefully give them a bit of an understanding of what school will be like and hopefully reassure them.

We will be sending this to all children who are entitled to come into school, even those who have let us know their children will not be returning just yet, in case you change your mind at a later date.

We do not need you to make a decision as to whether you are planning to send your children back or not just yet. I fully understand that this isn't an easy decision to make. We will welcome whoever turns up on the day and if you decide to want your child to stay at home a bit longer and see how things go, then that's fine too; there is not rush to make a decision now. The government has confirmed that there will be no attendance penalties for families during this time.

As Nursery, Reception and Year 1 groups return to school, the online learning for these year groups will not be posted daily any longer. This is because the teachers and teaching assistants will be working all day with the pupils in school. They will not be able to provide the learning in school and spend time adapting and modifying alternative learning for those children who do not return.

However, the government have prepared for this reopening period and recognised that some of you may not wish to send your children back before the summer. The online Oak Academy was established for this purpose. It provides daily online learning matched to the National Curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage for each individual year group. You can access the Oak Academy here:

<https://www.thenational.academy/online-classroom/schedule/#schedule>

Other online learning is also available to supplement the home learning. You can find it here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-online-education-resources-for-home-education>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/dailylessons>

There are also links to many other useful websites on our school website.

Online learning will continue for the younger nursery, Year 2, 3 and 4 while all children in those year groups remain at home, however this may be slightly reduced as the teachers for these year groups are also returning to school and will be with groups of children all day (please see links above if you require further ideas for learning).

We aim to continue with the weekly phone calls to children in Years 2, 3 and 4, however this will be from a teaching assistant rather than the class teachers. If they are unable to answer any of your questions or queries, they will take these to the teachers and will get back to you. All teachers will be still contactable via email, however we do ask you to be mindful to the fact that the teachers will be with groups of children throughout the school day.

For the children who will be in school, we will be providing lessons, linked to the curriculum but using the outdoor area as much as possible. This is to support social distancing and minimise the risk of contamination. We have established systems for individual resources and for sanitising any used equipment throughout the day. However, social distancing with our youngest learners will continue to be a challenge, as the government guidance recognises. We will adapt our learning to further improve the understanding and importance of social distancing.

Our classrooms will look different to our children as they return to school. There are some photos in the booklet we have sent home and we will also post them on our website. Please have a look at them and talk to the children about how the classrooms are now organised, saying goodbye at the main gate and eating lunch outside.

Reception and Year 1 children will be grouped in 'Blue Bubble' and 'Red Bubble'. Those in 'Red Bubble' will enter and exit school through the main pedestrian gate, which will be marked 'Red'. Those in 'Blue Bubble' will enter and exit school through the side gate next to the parish playground. This will be marked 'Blue'. Please remember to maintain the social distancing guidance and arrive promptly at the start and finish time for your group: Reception- 8.20am-2.20pm, Year 1- 8.30am-2.30pm, Nursery – 10.30am-1.30pm and Year2 -4 Key worker/vulnerable children 9am-3pm).

On the letter I sent last week I said that the children are not required to wear school uniform, but ideally their school jumper (or cardigan) and long trousers were required. Having thought about this further, if the weather is warm, they do not need a jumper and shorts, skirts or cropped trousers will be fine, but please bear in mind that they will be spending a lot of time outside and there is the risk of ticks, stings and bites.

We have ordered packed lunches from Chartwells for all of Reception and Year 1 children and fruit will be provided so the only things the children are required to bring into school are a water bottle, a water proof coat and on their first day a named sunhat that will stay in school (please do NOT bring in anything else).

If you need to contact us, email contact will remain the only form of communication. We monitor the emails in real time during office hours, so please use it as the primary way to get in touch.

Lastly, we want to remind you to have a really good break next week. Stay safe, enjoy the weather and relax. There is still much to do as we adapt and change our practices. This situation is going to be with us for a while.

Take care,

Ann