



COVID – 19 UPDATE: Potential Return to School from June 2020

Monday 18th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this email finds you and your family well, and that you are managing to cope with the current situation as best as you are able.

As you will all be aware, the government has prioritised certain year groups to potentially return to school from Monday 1st June 2020.

Firstly, I would like to reassure you that we will not be making hurried decisions regarding the government's statement. We will be adhering to the Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson's advice (16.5.20, Live briefing) ensuring a, **"...phased, gradual and cautious approach"** as central to the Oratory's return to school strategy.

The health and safety of all our children, parents, carers and staff remains our top priority. I am sure you understand that we will never be able to guarantee 'social distancing' but we will try to adhere to 'the 2 metre rule' wherever possible. The government have stated that we can have up to 15 pupils in a classroom however we are unable to accommodate this due to the size of our rooms. Thus between 6 and 10 pupils will be in each classroom. **We only have space for 3 groups of children:**

1. Children of key workers and vulnerable families
2. Year 1 children
3. Year 6 children

Currently, we are unable to offer provision for Nursery and Reception children.

Although the government have shared their 'ambition' that ALL primary pupils are expected to return before the summer holidays, at this current point in time, we do not believe this to be safe.

Thank you to those who responded to our short survey (over 70% of our families) that went out last week. This information is aiding our school preparations however a number of families were undecided about their child returning to school.

To ensure we have accurate numbers, **on Tuesday 19th May, parents and carers of children in Y1 and Y6 will receive a text message** asking if they intend to send their child back to school in June. Please reply to this text with just **the name of your child**, the **Year Group** and either **YES** or **NO** (for whether they will be returning or not). **Please reply straightaway.**

If we have not heard from you by the end of Tuesday 19th May, we will attempt to call you to find out what you intend to do.

If there are any other children from Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 with key worker parents or carers, who need a school place, please email communication@oratory.bham.sch.uk with your child's name and year group. We will then contact you.

To help aid your decision here are some key facts about the new rules within our school following government, DFE and Local Authority guidance.

1. Children will be working in much smaller groups – there will be **no more than 10** children in each class, and I hope to provide two adults to work with each group. Desks will be 2m apart.
2. **Children in a group will not mix with any other children during the course of the day.** They will keep together as a group, play outside together and eat lunch together in their classroom.
3. **Start of day and end of day times will be staggered** so that we minimise contact between parents / carers and between children from different groups.
4. The adult bringing and collecting each child **MUST** live in the same household as the child.
5. For anyone using public transport to get to or from school – please read the Government advice at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>
6. Children **will not wear school uniform between now and the Summer holiday.** The virus can be carried on soft fabrics so children should come to school in freshly washed clothes each day, and it may not be practical to be washing uniform every night. Instead, children should wear clothes that are comfortable and practical for working indoors and outside – they will not be changing for PE so jogging bottoms and sweatshirts (or shorts and t-shirts for warmer weather) and trainers would be ideal. However, all school policies regarding jewellery and hairstyles etc remain the same.
7. **If you child does not attend school, they will continue to receive weekly Home Learning Projects.**
8. **School will not be open on Fridays except for key worker and vulnerable children.** This is to allow for more thorough cleaning and to give staff time to set and respond to work online, as well as planning and preparation.
9. Parents and carers will not be able to have the same casual ‘drop in’ conversations with staff at the beginning and end of the school day. **The office will be closed to parents and carers, except by phone.** If you need to speak to a member of staff, it will either have to be by telephone, or by making an appointment, so an appropriate time and socially distanced space can be arranged.
10. Only one adult per child will be allowed onto school premises to drop and collect. **No parents or carers will be allowed inside the school building unless by prior appointment.**
11. Every classroom will have its own drop off and collection point. **All adults will be expected to keep to a strict 2 metre distance when dropping off and collecting.** We will also be asking you not to meet and socialise by the school gates because this will increase the risk of children coming into contact with children from other groups.

12. **Children at school and school staff who display symptoms of COVID-19 are now eligible for a test.** If a child displays symptoms in school they will be isolated from their group immediately and the parent called to collect them. Children will not be permitted to return until they have the results of a test. In the case of a positive test, all other children in that group will have to isolate at home for 14 days.

PLEASE REMEMBER: You have the right to decide whether you think it is safe and appropriate to send your child/children back into school when we begin to open. There will be no consequences for families who choose for their children to remain at home during the remainder of the Summer Term, and I will of course respect the decision that you decide to make.

Finally, I appreciate that this is going to be a difficult and inconvenient time; one that will impact on your daily schedule.

Please do remember that every decision we are making is based on trying to keep all of the children in our school, and the staff who work with them, as safe as possible.

Keep safe, keep well.

God bless you all.



Mrs C Dickinson
Head Teacher