

Important Update – Wednesday 20th May

Dear Parent / Carer,

I am writing to you to provide further detail regarding some Year groups returning to school based learning after half term and the provision for other students, including those who are the children of critical Key Workers who require childcare provision.

This email contains a lot of important information. A summary of any actions you need to take or important updates are below.

Summary for Nursery and Year R

- Maintain social distancing at home.
- Introduce your child to the concept of the Family Bubble and the need to stay in the Family Bubble when at school. You can use this explainer video here:
<https://youtu.be/VG347gkQ5zM>
- Ensure your child wears clean clothes each day (not school uniform) that is suitable for outdoor play and PE
- Refresh your child's understanding of our key school rules.
- If students are not able to engage appropriately at school, respecting social distancing and the need for Family Bubbles to remain apart from each other then we will have no choice but to ask that child to engage with distance learning at home.
- If your child shows symptoms or tests positive for Covid-19 do not send your child to school and inform the school office immediately by phone.
- If a child feels unwell, they should alert one of their Family Bubble staff immediately.
- If a member of your child's bubble, student or staff, shows symptoms or tests positive for Covid-19 we will be asking everyone in that bubble to stay at home and self-isolate for 14 days.
- Children do not need to wear school uniform as it is important that your child is in clean clothes each day to help reduce any spread of the virus. The clothes must be suitable for school (no sandals, open-toed shoes, flipflops etc) and for PE activities.
- The latest **Government guidance is that wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended**. Therefore, students and staff will not wear masks whilst in school.

All other students must stay at home and continue to engage with their distance learning in the way they have done up to now. For the children of Key Workers requiring childcare this will now be provided at their school from 1st June and parents should continue to provide **24 hours notice** of their intention to use this provision.

We will be opening as follows from 2nd June:

Year group	First date students should attend school
Nursery	Tuesday 2 nd June
Reception	Tuesday 2 nd June
Key Worker children	Monday 1 st June

I would like to reemphasise our belief that Child First = Child Safe = Adult Safe. This has been the key principle that has guided our planning since we began working on how to safely transition children back in to school based learning.

I appreciate that this will be a longer communication than usual but, given the circumstances, I believe you will appreciate having as much information as possible at this time.

Reminder of guidance published by the government:

As you know, whilst there has been a partial relaxing of the lockdown there are still significant restrictions that we must all abide by. This is important for us as the “Bubble” approach we have taken is aimed at minimising the interaction of people when they are in school. To complement this approach it is important that we all minimise contact with other people when outside of school. I have summarised the key restrictions that are currently in place below:

- During the emergency period, no person may leave or be outside of the place where they are living without reasonable excuse.
- People are allowed to meet one member of another household in a public space.
- The law bans public gatherings of more than two people, except in specific circumstances.
- Exercise “with one member of another household” in outdoor public spaces, such as parks or the countryside.
- There is no limit on where the exercise can take place, and the government made clear in its new guidance that people can drive into the countryside for walks or recreation.

Family Bubbles:

To support social distancing and reduce the risk of unnecessary contact we are introducing Family Bubbles.

Each student will be part of a small, consistent Family Bubble with assigned staff who will only work with children in that Family Bubble. Children are, therefore, protected from contact with any other child outside their Family Bubble whilst at school.

How will the bubbles work?

- We have limited the Family Bubbles to a maximum of 15 students.
- Your child will be issued with a coloured wristband each day. This wristband will need to be kept on throughout the whole day and will be replaced every morning.
- Bubbles will study together, take breaks / lunches together and they will only use facilities such as playgrounds and IT suites with this bubble.

Information about which bubble your child will be in, will be communicated soon.

Opening Hours:

In order to welcome students back to Penhale Infants School safely and ensure social distancing we have introduced a staggered timetable for students returning to school based learning. **Our overall school opening hours are: 8.40-3.15, however, there will be flexible start times to allow for safe entry to the school.** In addition, we are changing how students and parents enter and leave the school as follows:

The school site will have a one-way system in place to prevent too many people gathering in one area. **Entrance to the site is via the gate on Lincoln Road and exit via the gate on Penhale Road.** In both the mornings and afternoons, we ask you to wait outside the gate (observing the social distancing markings on the pavement) and wait to be invited onto the school site. As you enter through the gate on Lincoln Road, we ask that everyone (parent and child) use the hand sanitiser that will be available. In the morning, you will then drop your child with the adult assigned to their bubble and then exit the site through the gate on Penhale Road. We are not allowing any parents into the school building. I know this may be difficult and is out of routine for the children, but the safety of all children and staff is paramount. When you pick your child up, they will be waiting on the playground and you again exit through the gate on Penhale Road. Please ensure that only one adult comes to the school for drop off and pick up. If you have children who are in more than one group (Nursery, Reception, or attending the Key worker provision), please speak to us as we will try to find a way to drop them off and pick up at the same time.

The arrival and departure times for different bubbles will be communicated at a later date.

The school day:

As explained in my previous letter each Family Bubble will follow its own individual timetable to ensure it is always kept separated from any other Family Bubble.

Below is an example timetable for one of the bubbles:

	8.40-9	9-9.30	9.30-10	10-10.30	10.30-11	11-11.30	11.30-12	12-12.30	12.30-1	1-1.30	1.30-2	2-2.30
Red		Start time: 9.10 - 9.20	In class	In class	Playtime	In class	Lunch	Playtime	In class	PE	PE	In class 2.25 home time

In the first week back we will be working with children to help them re-socialise appropriately after an extended period of isolation. This will include establishing new 'bubble' rules, behaviour expectations, PSHE activities, getting to know each other etc.

We will of course be encouraging frequent and thorough hand washing throughout the day and encouraging the children to social distance as far as possible but as I am sure you can imagine this is very difficult with young children. Staff will also ensure that work areas, resources and equipment are cleaned regularly, especially if these are shared across bubbles.

School Lunches:

Robust controls are being implemented in kitchens to ensure catering staff are social distancing whilst preparing and serving food and extra checks will be made to ensure our supplier is delivering exceptionally high food safety standards.

As always, children in Reception are entitled to a free school lunch. During this phased return, it is likely that school lunches will be more of a “packed lunch” option which means they can be eaten outside (if the weather is good) or in the classroom. We have decided to do this as we are not confident that we would be able to clean the hall between each bubble using it and so would rather not take this risk.

Families entitled to receive free school meals will continue to receive the voucher scheme until further notice. If your child does access in school offer we will provide them with a free school meal in addition to this voucher.

Uniforms:

During this time, we are not asking students to wear uniform. Please ensure that you keep your clothes clean and regularly washed to help maintain the highest standards of hygiene. Whilst wearing non school uniform our usual non school uniform rules apply as described earlier.

Face masks:

The latest **Government guidance is that wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended**. Furthermore, the government states that schools and other education or childcare settings should therefore not require staff, children and learners to wear face coverings. The majority of staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others.

Therefore, students and staff will not wear masks whilst in school.

School Rules:

This has been an unusual time for us all and we have had to make many adjustments during lockdown. Children would have missed their friends and the structure their school environment brings through routine. As we move into the next stage and begin to reclaim some normality, we will be asking all our students to remember school rules and behave in a suitable manner within their bubbles.

We must make it clear that our first priority is to keep our community safe as we transition back to school based learning. Therefore, **if a child is unable to engage appropriately at school, respecting social distancing and the need for Family Bubbles to remain apart from each other then we will have no choice but to ask that child to engage with distance learning at home**. This is to ensure the safety of our whole school community.

Keeping our community safe over time:

Whilst we are studying within the Family Bubbles we will be following the Government self-isolation strategy. If a member of your child’s bubble, student or staff, shows symptoms or tests positive for Covid-19 we will be asking everyone in that bubble to stay at home and self-isolate for 14 days.

If your Child shows symptoms or tests positive for Covid-19 do not send your child to school and inform the school office by phone.

If you are at school and begin to show symptoms then you must tell your Teacher immediately. We will contact parents to alert them that their child is showing symptoms and ask them to collect their child immediately.

These rules also apply if anyone in your household is affected. We are not medical professionals and we will be following the national advice. You can find information about symptoms [here](#).

Please note that if someone displays potentially Covid-19 symptoms but following a test is found not to have the virus then the members of the Family Bubble will be able to return to school.

Where to look for further information

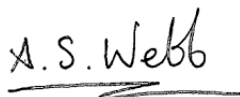
We have launched today a dedicated website for information on our plans to return students safely to school.

The Thinking Schools Academy Trust is actively responding to ongoing developments with the Coronavirus outbreak so please use the links on this page for updated information on our response and what it will mean for you.

FAQs and information: www.tsatrust.org.uk/coronavirus

We look forward to safely welcoming some children back to school next term. We will keep under review our ability to safely accommodate children from other year groups going forward. However, this will only be done when we are confident that this can be done safely.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. S. Webb". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Mrs A Webb
Headteacher