



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 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 Year R:

- Maintain social distancing at home.
- Introduce your child to the concept of the Family Bubble (Island) and the need to stay in the Family Bubble (Island) when at school. You can use this explainer video here <https://youtu.be/VG347gkQ5zM> . There are also a couple of powerpoints introducing “Super Nellie “– one on the Coronavirus and the other about returning to school - on our website under the Home Learning tab which are more child friendly that you wish to share with your child.
- Note the start and finish time for your child’s Family Bubble (Island).
- Refresh your child’s understanding of our key school rules – details below.
- If students are not able to engage appropriately at school, respecting social distancing and the need for Family Bubbles (Islands) 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 on 023 9273 1082
- If a child feels unwell, they should alert one of their Family Bubble (Island) staff immediately.
- If a member of your child’s Bubble (island), student or staff, shows symptoms or tests positive for Covid-19 we will be asking everyone on that island to stay at home and self-isolate for 14 days.
- There will be no school uniform.
- 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 unless dealing with first aid/medical issues.

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 1st June:

Year group	First date students should attend school
YEAR R	1st JUNE, 2020

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” “Island” 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 for 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 (Islands):

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

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

How will the bubbles (Islands) work?

- We have limited the Family Bubbles (Islands) to 15 students.
- Your children will be allocated to an “Island” and you will be informed of which at a later date.
- Your child will be issued with a coloured wristband on entry to the classroom (Island) each morning. This wristband will need to be kept on throughout the whole day and will be replaced daily.
- Bubbles (Islands) will study together, take breaks / lunches together and they will only use facilities such as playgrounds with this bubble (Island).
- If your child usually has additional learning support they can access teachers outside of their bubble (Island) by contacting the school office.

Opening Hours:

In order to welcome children back to Meon Infant 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: 8.30 – 3.30 p.m., 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 :

Parents of Year R children will queue along Shelford Road in signed areas. Once in the playground you will access your child’s Island via the designated route. Parents will then leave via the Crofton Road Gate. We ask that **ONLY ONE PARENT** drops off and collects children. Please can you also rely this to your childminder if they will be collecting on your behalf. (Remember to inform the school if someone else is collecting your child at any time).

The arrival and departure times for different bubbles (Islands) will be as follows:

Bubble	Arrival Time	Departure Time Mon./Tue./Thur./Fri.	Departure Time on Wednesday	Entrance / Exit
Seal Island	8.40 a.m.	3.10 p.m.	12.00 noon	Shelford Road/Crofton Road
Dolphin Island	8.40 a.m.	3.10 p.m.	12.00 noon	Shelford Road/Crofton Road
Puffin Island	8.50 a.m.	3.20 p.m.	12.15 p.m.	Shelford Road/Crofton Road
Penguin	8.50 a.m.	3.20 p.m.	12.15 p.m.	Shelford Road/Crofton Road
Key Worker children	8.30 a.m.	3.30 p.m.		Shelford Road/Crofton Road

Please note there will be **NO SCHOOL** for **Year R children** on a **Wednesday afternoon** and children should be collected at the above times.

As the provision is for YEAR R and KEYWORKER children only to return to school on 1st June, 2020 can I emphasise that if you are a Key worker parent with a child in Year R you will may decide it is better for your child to be in an allocated Year R Island with friends rather than the Key Worker Island with Year 1 and Year 2 children. However, as the school will be closed to Year R children on a Wednesday afternoon and they have attended a Year R Island you will need to find childcare for that afternoon as they will not be able to go into the Key Worker Island on a Wednesday afternoon due to cross contamination.

The reason Year R children will not attend school on a Wednesday afternoon is so that we can maintain a deep cleaning programme and also provide planning/preparation time for the teachers.

The school day:

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

These timetables will broadly follow the following pattern of activities:

As in any “normal” school day there will be 3 sessions – 2 in the morning and 1 in the afternoon including appropriate breaks. Playtimes/outdoor play will be staggered for each Bubble (Island).

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 conversations within their Islands around the new school routines and expectations.

School Lunches:

We will be ensuring social distancing measures are upheld in dining rooms and are planning on staggered lunch breaks to ensure family groups are kept isolated. 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.

We will be providing **school packed lunches** which will consist of a ham or cheese sandwich – fruit – cake/biscuit. If you would prefer you can send in a packed lunch for your child. However please ensure that the container is thoroughly washed each evening as with water bottles. These meals will be free of charge to Year R.

Uniforms:

During this time, we are not asking children 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. **No** PE kits will be required initially.

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, children 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 children to remember school rules and behave in a suitable manner within their bubbles (Islands).

The most important information you can give your child is to reinforce social distancing, washing hands regularly, that they **MUST** keep in their “Island” at all times and can **only** use the equipment allocated to them.

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 (Islands) 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 (Islands) we will be following the Government self-isolation strategy. If a member of your child’s bubble (Island), 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 on 023 9273 1082.

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 (Island) 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 children 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,

Lynda Daish

Headteacher