

Wednesday 20th May 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope that you and your families are well.

Thank you once again for all your support and understanding at a time when you and schools are facing significant challenges.

Thank you very much to our **Reception parents** for replying so promptly to our anonymous survey. We had 100% response rate and 83 (out of 90) confirmed they would like to their child to return to school. This information has enabled me to continue with the planning and ensuring all the details can be considered.

Further questions from Year One and Two Parents

I have received a very small number of further questions so I am pleased that you found the information provided helpful so far. I know that most of you really want and need your children to come back to school. This is such a challenging situation and we know that children are better being in school. The Staff and I also want things to be “back to normal” and really want to see all the classes return. However, we must, as communicated, bring the children back in the careful and phased way which has been directed by the DFE and very much hope that the restrictions placed on all of us will be removed as the virus reproduction rate reduces.

Can you create part time entry to double the number of children returning to The Orchard?

- No. The Department for Education has made it very clear that we are not permitted to use this approach. This is because it would double the number of people interacting and being on the school site thus increasing the risk of infection. *“Schools should not plan on the basis of a rota system, either daily or weekly”. DFE, 14.5.20*
- This approach would not support families. With staggered drop off and collection times the children would not be in school for a significant enough part of the day to enable any families to return to their normal work easily.

Can you use St Lawrence for additional classes?

- St Lawrence also has to provide small class groups, (maximum size 15), for the year six children who will be returning, the key worker class, and then plan for its own additional year groups to return.
- Our staff will already be used fully to enable the return of year R to a school system where we have to maintain a maximum of fifteen in each small class group.
- There would still be insufficient classrooms to be able to do this between the two schools. In addition, the furniture, resources and facilities are not set up for five to six year- old children who would be entirely unfamiliar with the environment.

Can you prioritise year two children next?

- The DFE have stated their response to this question: “No. Only pupils in the eligible years plus vulnerable children and children of critical workers should come in to school from the week commencing 1 June”
- The DFE has also stated that it is their ambition that all Primary School pupils should return before the end of the academic year. This is what we want for all our children. In particular we want to support our Year 2 children with the transition to year 3. However, we must

ensure we manage the school safely and follow the current restrictions on class size. Looking forward, in order to manage additional year groups returning to school and have all 270 pupils, the current restrictions and rules we are being asked to work within would need to be removed.

How do we continue to motivate our children and ensure they are learning if they are not back at school?

- We realise that for Year One and Two parents it may be increasingly difficult to motivate your children and extremely challenging to keep the routine going particularly now the novelty has worn off. The teachers are currently planning how to support you further in this challenge. Look out for details on the Learning Platform after half term.
- Also, the teachers want to see the examples of the children's writing, and other work, (some of you have already been sending these- thank you!). Please do upload or email photos of the work they have done for individual comment and feedback by the teacher. There is a section for uploading and commenting on the front page of the year one or year two "course". If you do not wish to include your child's face- just photograph the work. It is also motivating for the teachers to see the children's work and hear your feedback as they are used to seeing the direct results of their work in class each day and really miss that.

Can you provide online lessons with our child's class teacher?

No- this is because:

- The teachers are currently not in school every day and working from home planning and preparing online learning materials through power-points. They have provided internet links and film clips where appropriate. They are recording stories and responding to daily communications from their team leaders, myself and parents in addition to keeping up with online training and curriculum or team leadership tasks. In addition, many of my staff are looking after very young children and supporting elderly parents/relatives who are shielding.
- An online lesson at the infant stage is far more difficult to recreate than at a later stage of their education. Our lessons are highly interactive and dependent on a whole class being in the right environment with the right resources. We do not teach a whole lesson with children sitting passively and listening. We have the children talking in pairs, doing practical tasks, watching mini film clips and solving problems in groups. "Chalk and Talk lessons" are not good practice at the Infant stage and would not be motivating for most learners. There is also the issue that some of our children do not have internet access or their families would not wish them to participate. We are trying our best to provide resources which all children can access, some on paper and most through the Learning Platform. As stated, the teachers and I are thinking about what else we can do to support you in the context of all staff being used in classrooms or for online planning and communications after Half Term.
- After Half term most teachers will be involved in teaching the Reception children throughout the day.
- There are many other video and motivational game style resources in addition to our provision which teachers have signposted including: BBC bitesize tv daily, Oak Academy, Espresso, Spelling Shed, Oxford Owl, Mathletics, Twinkl, White Rose, etc.

Can you provide online learning for Reception children if they do not attend school?

- Education is being provided for all Reception children ***in school*** so we will not continue with online learning for Reception children. The only exception to this will be for a child who cannot attend school due to them or their parent being classed as “clinically extremely vulnerable” (For instance: cancer and transplant patients) ***or*** for a child who is “clinically vulnerable”, (pre- existing complex medical conditions)
- Online learning will still be provided for year one and two children.

Will there be Breakfast and After School Club?

- Unfortunately, we are unable to provide before and after school care during this time. This is due to the restrictions in place as we are unable to mix the children from separate class groups.

Staff News

Currently we have a small number of staff who are unable to return to work as they must shield or who have no alternative as others are dependent on their care. Fortunately, we have enough staff to lead and support our seven small classes, (six year R classes and one Key worker class), as well as provide some lunch cover. Our aim is to ensure a consistent staff team for each small class with a member of staff in each class who is known well to the children. This is to ensure continuity for the children and to reduce the number of different people involved with each class.

I am very excited to announce that Mrs Tynegate is expecting a baby. I know that you will join the staff team in sending your congratulations to her. Due to the restrictions and the advice from the Department for Education and Public Health Authority, Mrs Tynegate will not be able to join the staff team in school but will be leading the planning from home. Miss Mc Donald will be the Lead Teacher for the Reception Year Group in school.

I would like this opportunity to thank my whole staff team who have risen to the challenges admirably. They have been an amazing team since early March when we were keeping the school open with a third of our staff in self isolation with symptoms and managing year groups with one or two teachers. Now they are planning and communicating daily, presenting stories online, teaching a mixed age group of children they did not know before, supporting our children with severe and complex needs and preparing for a newly organised school in June. Every person has stepped up and contributed in ways they would never have thought of before this unprecedented situation. This has been in a context of ever- changing information and significant social media and press opinion. Their flexibility, sense of humour, collaboration, creativity and above all motivation to do the best for all our children and serve the school community, has been exemplary.

Thank you to all of them.

Please also see attached letter from Surrey County Council which I have been asked to send to you.

Organisation Plan for Reception and Key Worker Children from June 1st

Here is the staffing and building plan for Reception and Key Worker Classes. Please note that the room used does not mean the child’s group. We are spacing out the class groups as far as we can so some will be taught in the year one and year 2 classrooms. Please note the drop off times and collection times. These are spaced apart to ensure we have as few people on site at the same time as possible. Please do not arrive early for the designated time.

Parents must **enter** through the **Hansler Grove entrance** and **leave through the Bridge Gardens** exit. **Only one parent** may bring their child/children and must leave promptly. There must be no gathering of parents.

We are not able to move children to different class groups on request. We have done our very best to maintain friendship groups and ensure that each class group will be a similar mix of boys and girls.

If at any time you or your child develops symptoms of Coronavirus you must stay at home.

Classroom	Class Group	Teacher	LSA class support	1:1 support	Drop off time	Collection time
Holly	Holly 1	Mr Lavall	Mrs Hook	Mrs Avery	8.45 am	2.30pm
Elm	Elm 1	Mr Elliott/Mrs Trueman	Mrs De Silva/Mrs Trueman	Mrs De Silva	9.00am	2.45 pm
Ash	Ash 1	Miss Mc Donald	Miss Holloway	Mrs Johns	9.05 am	2.50 pm
Willow	Elm 2	Mr Bond	Mrs Long	Mrs Best	8.50am	2.35 pm
Rowan	Ash 2	Miss Wroth	Mrs Alexander	N/A	9.10 am	2.55 pm
Sycamore	Holly 2	Mrs Webb	Mrs Hicks	Mrs Johnson	8.55am	2.40pm
Beech	Key worker children from year 1 and 2	Mrs Shaw Mon, Tue Mrs Turi Weds Miss Mc Carthy Thurs, Fri	Mrs Lavall (am) Mrs Sleath (pm)	Mrs Barrow	8.40 am	3pm

Mrs. Denton, Mrs. Summerell and Mrs Patel will be providing break cover for staff along with the class based LSAs.

Mrs Beale and Mrs Finch will be doing the online planning and communications for year one parents. Miss McCarthy and Mrs Shaw will be doing the online planning and communications for year two parents.

What the Reception and additional Key worker/vulnerable children need to bring:

- From June 1st we would like all the children to come to school in their **summer uniforms**, leaving jumpers at home as far as possible. We need the children to bring a lightweight **coat** in case of rain.
- If it is sunny, please apply all day **sun-cream** to the children before they come to school
- A **hat** with their name in.
- **Water bottle** – to be left at school for a week (rinsed and refilled by staff) and returned home on a Friday
- A **packet of tissues** to be kept in their own individual zip-lock bag at school
- **NO bookbags**
- **Sensible shoes or trainers** to be worn (no extra shoes to be brought) which they can do outdoor pe in each day
- **Spare clothes** in a named carrier bag
- Their own clearly **NAMED scooter** which they will be able to use during outdoor play. This must be brought up to their classroom as it will be kept here throughout the day ready for outdoor play. Please do not park scooters in the usual scooter park- thank you!
- An additional named carrier bag (to keep a small selection of outdoor play/pe equipment which we are providing)

PLEASE BRING EVERYTHING IN THE MORNING AS WE WILL NOT ALLOW PARENTS TO RETURN DURING THE SCHOOL DAY WITH FORGOTTEN ITEMS.

What we will be providing:

- School dinners in four small sittings. (Please inform us if your child will be bringing a packed lunch.)
- A zip-lock learning pack for each child containing pencil, whiteboard, pen, scissors, glue stick etc.
- Outdoor equipment for each child which will be named by staff or put in named carrier: Ball, hoop, bean bag, bat and ball, skipping rope, etc.
- Outdoor equipment which can be shared by each group and will be washed regularly.
- Frequent hand washing.
- Cleaning between learning sessions and each day after school.
- A daily timetable which includes indoor and outdoor learning with a focus on very small group teaching to include: Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Phonics, PE, Singing and Personal, Social and Health education.

Following this letter, I am writing to Reception parents separately to inform you which class group your child is in.

We will be closing for Half Term. If you have any further questions please do email me or the year group teams by 3.30 pm on Friday. We will not be responding to emails during the Half Term Break.

For urgent safeguarding concerns (this is available through half term but **only** for emergency safeguarding): dsl@orchard.surrey.sch.uk

Mrs Rusby/Office Team: admin@orchard.surrey.sch.uk

Reception: reception@orchard.surrey.sch.uk

Year One: y1@orchard.surrey.sch.uk

Year Two: y2@orchard.surrey.sch.uk

We look forward to seeing our Reception children on 1st June and to seeing our year one and two children as soon as the restrictions are eased and we can safely bring them back. Thank you once again for all your support.

With very best wishes,

Carol Rusby