

Abacus Primary School

Newsletter 366

15/05/2020



You will have heard the coverage in the press about the Governments Plan for schools to begin a **phased return for early years settings and schools**.

Schools are being asked to prepare to begin to open for more children from 1 June. Should we be required to open, Monday 1st June 2020 is an INSET day here at Abacus Primary School, so we will not be

opening until at least Tuesday 2nd June 2020.

The Government expects children to be able to return to early years settings and for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to be back in school in smaller sizes, from this point. This aims to ensure that the youngest children and those preparing for the transition to secondary school, have maximum time with their teachers.

Thank you to the parents who responded to my text this week. I recognise that some of you will find this decision very difficult at this time and also recognise that you need further information regarding the proposed measures we will put in place, we will be contacting parents who were unsure next week to discuss this further.

It is important to highlight that our school will look and feel very different to what we are used to as this phased return begins and children **will not** be returning to school full time from 1st June 2020.

As always, the health and safety of pupils and staff must remain our prime concern and with that as our key focus, our Conditional plan includes:

- Children in Year 1 and Foundation will be in school for one day each week and children in Year 6 will be in school for 2 days a week. The days will remain the same each week and will be allocated by the school. We cannot accept individual requests for days.
- Children will stay in the same class base for the duration of the time that they are in school with the same group of up to a maximum of 8 children and with the same staff for that week.
- We will try our very best to ensure that there will be at least one member of staff with the children during their time in school that the children know well.
- They will not mix with other groups.
- The morning drop offs and pick ups will be staggered and there will be allocated entrances for different classes/year groups.

- Playtimes and lunchtimes will be staggered.
- Only one family member will be able to drop off/pick the children up.
- Children will not be permitted to play football or stay on the school premises before or after their school day.
- All school events (assemblies, Sports days, end of year assemblies etc...) are cancelled until further notice.
- We will be organising something digitally for the Year 6 Leaver's and will arrange a social event at a later date, when this is possible.
- Children in school will be following the home learning curriculum, which will continue to be planned for all year groups. It will be made clear on the plans which activities will be offered during their time in school, so that there is no overlap.
- Lunch will be offered, but this will be a limited menu.
- Children will eat in their classrooms and only socialise with their group.
- Children will be expected to wear school uniform- uniform should be washed daily.
- Siblings of other year groups will not be attending school (other than the three focus year groups).
- A deep clean has already been carried out across the school, but cleaning will continue to be increased throughout each school day.
- Should your child or any family member begin to show symptoms of Covid-19 then you must follow the government guidelines and NOT send your child to school.

We continue to follow the DFE and Local Authority guidelines and at this moment it has not been confirmed that schools will return on this date. I will continue to use our weekly newsletter, which is on the school website and our school Facebook page.

Please see a letter attached to the newsletter from Clare Kershaw, Director of Education at Essex County Council.

By working together we will get through these challenging times and try and make things as calm and 'normal' for the children as possible.

Mrs Blakeley

As a school we have been offered the opportunity to participate in the Joy of Moving Home School Festival which is going ahead next week (18th-22nd May).

It would be great if we, as a school, could all take part in this together as a school community on the afternoon of Wednesday 20th May. However, if you are unable to take part on Wednesday any afternoon during this week is fine.

There are prizes to be won for the most interactive school via Social Media at #JOMHomeFestival or sending videos/pictures to me at purpleclass@abacus.essex.sch.uk and with your permission I can pass these on to Southend United CET which they will then post.

I hope you have fun taking part and look forward to seeing your videos.

Please keep an eye out for more information sent via class emails

Kind regards

Mrs Keeley



Online phonics lessons for Letters and Sounds

We are pleased to let you know that your child can receive a daily phonics lesson whilst schools are closed. Phonics is the way we teach children to recognise the sounds in words. It helps your child to learn to read and is an essential part of your child's education. During the summer term, you will be able to access for your child a daily phonics lesson by clicking on [Letters and Sounds for home and school](#). All lessons are introduced by celebrities, including children's TV presenters, which adds an exciting addition to the lessons. There are three sets of daily lessons to choose from and we suggest your child starts with one set of lessons most suitable to their year group **and** reading ability. If you're not sure which lessons your child should watch or your child finds the lessons too difficult, then talk to your child's class teacher via Tapestry or class email.

A new phonics lesson will be uploaded everyday, Monday to Friday, at the times below during the summer term. *After upload, each lesson will then be available to watch at any time during the summer term.

10 am*	<u>Reception Summer term</u> Phases 3 & 4	For Reception children who can blend and read words such as 'fish' 'chat' and 'rain'
10:30 am*	<u>Year 1 Summer term</u> Phase 5	For Year 1 children who can confidently blend and read words such as 'stamp' 'chair' and 'green'
11 am*	<u>Learning to blend</u> Phase 2 recap	For children in Reception and Year 1 who need extra practice sounding and reading words such as 'tap' 'cap' 'mat' 'pat'



You will notice that on some of the topic plans this week are year group/ class challenges. It would be great to see as many children (and staff) as possible engage with these challenges. They will be made into a collage or video and will be uploaded to our website and school Facebook page.

This week the Year 3 '**Walk like and Egyptian**' challenge was uploaded. Thank you to all the children that got involved and to the whole Year 3 Team and special thanks to Mrs Mugford for creating the video.



Dear Parent / Carer,

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Update – Phased Reopening of Schools

Firstly, I want to thank you once again for your contribution to the national response to the Coronavirus pandemic. For the majority of you, being at home with your child(ren) and supporting their continued learning, alongside your own work and wellbeing, is a significant challenge in what are both unprecedented and worrying times. However, we do know that this action has helped to reduce the spread of the virus and is helping to save lives.

I am sure that many of you will have watched the Prime Minister's address to the nation on Sunday evening and read subsequent details either online or in the media about the plans to begin to re-open schools more widely.

You will have heard the Prime Minister indicating that the government believes that as well as schools being open to the children of critical workers and for vulnerable pupils, it may be in a position to implement a phased re-opening of schools from 1st June at the earliest, starting with pupils in nurseries, reception, year one and year six. This will be in addition to accommodating children of critical workers and vulnerable pupils.

Secondary Schools and Alternative Providers are considering their approach to offering some face to face time for pupils and we are working with Special Schools on their plans to gradually increase the number of children and young people on site, again from the 1st June at the earliest.

This is part of the government's conditional plan which it says will remain under regular review, which is yet to be finalised and will only happen if the level of new infections continues to decrease and the government's other conditions are met.

We are working with schools to support their plans for a gradual and phased re-opening. Their plans will be guided by a thorough Health and Safety Risk Assessment taking in to account their physical capacity on the school site and staffing levels.

We know that you will understand that the safety of everyone in the school community is paramount. We all want to get more pupils back into school as soon as it is safe to do so. However, in supporting schools to re-open in a phased and gradual way, the first priority to consider will be the health and well-being of all pupils and families and the staff.

Whilst all schools are working hard to respond to the guidance provided by the Department for Education, depending on each individual school context, some primary, infant and junior schools may not be able to offer full time provision for the relevant year groups, and any new arrangements may not be introduced exactly from the 1st June. Schools will be writing to parents over the next week to outline the offer and response that they are able to make, which will be based on the health and safety risk assessment that they have been asked to complete.

The guidance made it clear that it is not compulsory for parents to send their children to school at this time and there will be no penalties if you choose to keep your child(ren) at home.

All schools will continue to provide a home learning offer to all pupils not accessing support on site and will also keep in regular touch with the families of all pupils, whether or not they are attending school.

Further information for parents and carers can be found in the attached government guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

If you are the parent of a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan we will also be writing to you in the next week, via your child's school or setting, to update you on the temporary changes made by the government to the SEND legislation and what this means for your child. We will also be sharing this information via the Local Offer and the Essex Family Forum.

I want to assure you that schools are working closely with the Local Authority and the Headteacher Associations in order to offer a consistent and safe response to the proposed plans.

Finally, I would like to reassure you that the health and safety of children and staff remains everyone's first priority during this period.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please do contact your school in the first instance.

Thank you for your continued co-operation at this time.

Kind regards,



Clare Kershaw
Director of Education

Sent on behalf of:
Essex County Council
The Association of Secondary Headteachers in Essex
Essex Primary Headteacher Association
Essex Special Schools Education Trust