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Dear Parents and Carers of children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1, Year 6 and those attending essential childcare,

As you are aware, the government are have told schools to plan for a phased re-opening of schools from June 1st. Since this was announced, more guidance has been published by the government. We wanted to write to you to update you on our plans for a 'Safe Return to School' for your children and our staff.

Thank you so much for letting us know your intentions around your child returning to school and for all the messages of support, it is really appreciated by the staff. We want to make this a positive and caring experience for all our children, looking after them to ensure they feel safe and settled as we ease them back into school life.

We have prepared a 'Safe Return to School – Parent Guidance' which is attached. This has details of drop off/pick up arrangements, staffing etc. **Please note that to ensure a safe return for our pupils, we will be phasing year groups in gradually, not all year groups will be returning to school on the same date.** We are following government guidance and prioritising the youngest pupils first:

- **Tuesday 2nd June** School opens for **Nursery and Reception** pupils to return
- **Thursday 4th June** School opens for **Year 1** pupils to return
- **Monday 8th June** School opens for **Year 6** pupils to return

There are some other key points that we want to highlight as we prepare for reopening:

- Children will be in groups of no more than 15 and we will be dividing year groups accordingly. Based on the number of children we expect to be returning, we will be splitting Year 6 into two groups and will try to maintain friendship groups where possible. One group will be with Miss Davidson and Mrs Fox, the other group will be with Mrs Harland and Miss Allen. Year 1 and Nursery will not be split, Reception pupils will only be split for allocated drop off and pick up times. Vulnerable children and those of critical workers in these years groups will no longer be in the separate essential childcare, they will be with their year group when it returns. Siblings in years 2,3,4 and 5 will be in a separate essential childcare group.
- Children will remain in these groups at all times (including lunchtimes and breaktimes) with the same staff member as far as is possible. Lunches will be eaten in the classrooms.
- We will implement a strict cleaning programme that adheres to government guidelines, including: frequent ventilation, ensuring children have some personal equipment and reducing the number of resources available.
- The school will be zoned and organised effectively to ensure safe social distancing at all times; hand washing, the supply of hand sanitizers and PPE (as required for intimate care and to administer first aid).

We are continuing to provide essential childcare over the half term holiday, however the school will be **closed to all pupils on Friday 29th May and Monday 1st June** to carry out a deep clean and prepare the classrooms.



Frequently Asked Questions

Questions	Answers
Do I have to send my child to school?	Attendance will be encouraged but parents will not be penalised for non-attendance under the current guidelines. All we can do is provide you with the information outlined in the latest government guidance and reassure you that we will do the very best we can to ensure the safety of your children and our staff. However, we also recognise that despite our very best efforts, complete social distancing measures with our youngest children will be extremely difficult to maintain. School will not be as we know it and we are aware that some children could find coming back under these circumstances unsettling.
Should children and staff wear masks?	Children and staff are not required to wear PPE. Government guidance states “wearing a face covering or face mask in schools is not recommended.” Staff will only be required to wear face coverings when a pupil becomes unwell or needs direct personal care.
Will my child be taught by their class teacher in their usual classroom with the rest of their class?	Please see the ‘Safe Return to School – Parent Guidance’ for details of staffing and classrooms.
Will my child be with their friends?	In some cases year groups are being split and although we have tried to organise groups with friendships in mind, children will not be able to mix with all of their classmates. Group allocations cannot be changed once the pupils have returned to school.
Can my child have a school lunch?	Yes your child can have a school lunch or bring a packed lunch. Please let school know which option you would like.
Can I send my child back to school later than their allocated return date?	We appreciate that this is a difficult time for parents in making the decision to return your child to school. It would help us immensely if your child is going to return, that they do so from their allocated start date. If parents decide to return their child later in the term, it could prove difficult for us as we have been advised to avoid changing groups wherever possible. For health and safety reasons, children returning later than the rest of their year group may result in us having to start a separate new group for them and also arrange extra staffing for this group.
Will teachers continue to provide home learning for pupils whose parents have chosen not to send them back to school?	Yes, teachers will still be providing home learning for the children in the year groups whose parents have chosen not to send them back to school (along with for Years 2, 3, 4 and 5).

As the government guidance is constantly changing, these plans will be reviewed on an regular basis. **Please not that the return to school dates for pupils may change at short notice.** In the meantime if you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to contact the school.

Thank you again for your support and understanding during these times.

Kind regards,

S. Whelerton and the staff of Staindrop CE Primary School

