



Pilgrims' Way Primary School

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Headteacher: Miss AM Middleton



Dear Parents and Carers

Firstly, I would like to thank all of you who completed the form that I sent round last week. It is incredibly useful to hear your thoughts, concerns and suggestions and I thank you all for your honesty, openness and continued support at this very unusual time. It really is appreciated and I share many of your sentiments and opinions.

I am writing to you now, as we finish Term 5, to update you with possible plans for Term 6. I am working closely with senior leaders from across our Trust to unpack, question and challenge the Government's decision to reopen schools from June 1. We await more clarity and evidence with regards to the guidance currently issued to schools that reopening is safe in the current climate.

Before I write about Term 6, I wish to inform you that, due to increasing numbers, we will not be using Chartham Primary School as our Closed Hub next term. Friday 22 May will be the last day our children can attend at Chartham and neither school will be open over the half term break. I apologise for the difficulty this may cause some families but both schools are actively developing plans in preparation for the government's next announcement regarding the possibility of schools opening in June. My sincere thanks to my staff who have supported children at Chartham Hub and for the staff at Chartham Primary School who have made us all so welcome.

Free School Meal Vouchers

Our understanding, at this time, is that the government has informed schools not to provide FSM vouchers over the Spring half term break. Veritas MAT and Pilgrims' Way understand the difficulty the short notice of this decision may bring some families and therefore will be providing FSM vouchers for all eligible families through the current Wonde system. Eligible families will receive two weeks of vouchers this week.

Term 6

At this time, the position of Veritas Multi-Academy Trust and Pilgrims' Way Primary School is that we should begin making plans for a phased reopening of the school so that, should the government indicate that it is safe to do so, we can begin the reopening of school to some year groups AFTER June 1st. These plans will be scrutinised by our Trustee Board who will make the final decision, should the government make the announcement that schools will open in June.

At Pilgrims' Way pupils of Critical Workers, pupils with EHCP and those being supported by Social Services can be provided with child care, on site at Pilgrims' Way. Please use the form each week to secure a place <https://forms.gle/4NZhux2rw2X5FAub6>

Our Proposed Plan for Reopening:

What we will do:

Should it be deemed safe by the government for schools to reopen, we will begin the phased reopening of Pilgrims' Way Primary School in a slow and carefully-managed way. The details of our return plan are listed below. Please note that the children of Key Workers and children who are more vulnerable will continue to attend school whilst the phased reopening takes place. Children will be organised in "pods" of a maximum of 15 pupils, each led by one teacher and one TA. They will be encouraged to socially distance as much as possible based on the age of the pupils and we will build in new structures and new routines that make this possible. Children will remain in these pod groups for the duration of the school day - including breaks and lunchtimes. All plans will be reviewed through our Risk Assessment at least every week and you will be kept informed of any changes.

Step 1: Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd June: Staff Training Days

We will hold two training days for teaching staff on Monday June 1st and Tuesday June 2nd so that we can share information, train staff, set up the school and begin putting plans in place.

Step 2: Wednesday 3rd June: Return of Rabbit Class (Reception)

After working together for two days to fully implement and work through the details of our risk assessment, and to train staff, we would then be in a position to open, initially to pupils in Year R only from Wednesday 3rd June. Depending on numbers our Reception children will be split in two pod groups each with their own teacher and Teaching Assistant.

By doing this, we can ensure that our risk assessments and procedures are as safe as possible – and fully implemented and reviewed with a smaller number of pupils, before opening further for children in Year 1 and then Year 6 the following week. We will only do this if we are certain that all mitigating factors within our risk assessment are securely in place first.

Please be aware that our kitchen will not be available this week so packed lunches will need to be provided by parents/carers

Step 3: Monday 8th June: Return of Year 1

Our Year One pupils will be split into two pod groups and be based in the Butterfly and Koala classrooms.

Step 4: Wednesday 10th June: Return of Year 6

Our Year 6 pupils will be split into three pod groups and be based in the Dolphin, Polar Bear and Tiger classrooms, each with their own teacher and Teaching Assistant.

Once allocated a Pod children are expected to attend every day and will have the same teacher, TA and classroom so that we can start to normalise school and continue to reduce the risk of infection. The focus for children will be on their education and not child care so teachers will be planning and delivering an adapted curriculum to ensure gaps are closed and pupils become ready to move up to their next year group in September.

Home Learning will continue to be updated on the school's website for year groups not yet returning to school.

Please note that this plan is in the form of a proposal and may change following further consultation with Governors and Trustees.

Additional information

- If the government gives us the 'go ahead' we will not be able to provide school lunch for the first week. Any child who attends (Key worker, Reception children) will need to bring in a snack for morning break, packed lunch and a bottle of water.
- All children will be required to wear full school uniform. If you have any difficulties or your child has grown out of their school shoes, please contact us on the welfare@pilgrims-way.kent.sch.uk email.
- Social distancing measures will be in place around the school for the safety of our staff, children and families. Our back gate will remain closed. All children must enter the school through the front entrance gate.
- Hand washing facilities and hand gel are all available for use in each pod, all toilets and for children when they come in from their breaks.
- When dropping children at school, only one adult to come on school grounds to keep everyone safe
- The school office will not be open including use of the toilet. If you need support please see your child's Pod Leader on duty, telephone the school or email us.

Veritas MAT Board of Trustees met on Wednesday evening to review these plans and proposals and consider our risk assessment in preparation for reopening. They have approved the plan to additional year groups if the government confirms the reopening of schools on 1 June. Should there be any changes to what has been proposed, I will let you know as soon as possible.

I thank you all for continued support and hard work at such an uncertain time. I will email you again at the end of next week to clarify next steps.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch should you have any further questions.

Warm regards

Miss AM Middleton