



# Weekly Family Bulletin

Monday 18th May 2020

[www.halfwaynurseryinfantschool.org](http://www.halfwaynurseryinfantschool.org)

**Caring, Sharing, Learning for Life.**

I hope that you continue to be safe and well during our period of lockdown. We do try keep in touch with as many families as possible to see how you are, and it is lovely to see on our Twitter feed so many familiar smiley faces safe, well and spending time with their families at home (...although I cannot believe how much some of them have grown!).

We know this time is difficult for so many in many different ways, and, on behalf of the whole team here, I just wanted to say thank you to all for your support and hard work during this period of school closure and lockdown. We know this isn't easy but you're all doing a great job keeping your children happy and safe at home, as well as supporting learning at home where you can.

## School Update incl. Government guidance

### **This week**

Although all schools remain closed at present, it is important that vulnerable children (including children in need, those with an Education, Health and Care plan and those assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities) and the children of critical workers continue to be able to attend school, although we respect that some families are choosing to keep their children at home at present. Please continue to book places during closure by emailing us, as you have over the last few weeks, so we are able to organise our skeleton staff team which is currently working on a rota system in school.

### **What about half term?**

The government has not yet announced if schools should attempt to open over the upcoming half term holiday next week (should staff be able to volunteer to work out of term time/in the school holiday). We really are hoping that this guidance will come into school very soon as we too need to try and plan for this. Please watch this space!

### **And after that?**

I am sure you will have heard that the government has announced that it **MAY** decide that schools and early years settings could start to re-open **from** Monday 1 June (this may not necessarily be **on** 1st June in all schools), should it believe it safe to do so at this point, and also should the local authority and leadership team in each school also assess that it is safe to start re-opening. It is very important to stress at this point that the decision has **NOT** been made by the government yet to re-open schools - it has only indicated its intention, should assessment of risk and evidence show it is safe.

Three out of the four primary year groups/phases suggested to return to school first form part of our school - Nursery, F2 and Y1 (in addition to children in Y2 who are vulnerable or those whose parents/carers are keyworkers). As you can imagine, as a Nursery Infant School, this is a large proportion of our school population and it includes over 150 of children—this therefore poses challenges and will therefore require a substantial amount of planning, and time, to prepare for.

As we only have a fixed number of classrooms and also staff in school, we would not be able to accommodate this number of children in school in smaller classes/groups (the most up to date guidance suggests classes should comprise no more than 15 children). We, therefore, sent out a quick survey to ask for an initial indication of numbers who would, in principle, be interested in attending school should the government decide to re-open schools. Thank you to everyone who completed this survey, the results of which are helping us to risk assess and see what we may/may not be able to offer parents/carers. This information will now be factored into our decision making e.g. what year groups we may need to prioritise and invite back into school first when it is safe to do so. A further survey will be sent out to you later in the week to ask for more information so we can start to collect names and put groups together in case the decision is made for us to re-open, although plans cannot be confirmed until the decision has been made by the government. I appreciate that there are many unknowns regarding schools re-opening which causes difficulties for forward planning, both for parents/carers and also for schools. We will continue to share information with you as soon as we receive it.

## School Update continued...

Please be aware that we will need time to prepare classrooms and train staff on health and safety in preparation for any partial opening, should the government announce during the half term holiday that schools will be re-opening the following week. We need to wait for the announcement to be made before the leadership team are then able to use the most current information to fully risk assess the situation and the approach our school needs to take at that time. We hope you understand that no steps will be taken without all risks being fully assessed by the leaders and governors of our school; the wellbeing and safety of all members of our school community is of paramount importance to us.

If it is decided that we are to re-open, we may also take a phased approach for different groups to help children settle back into school and very different routines as calmly and as safely as possible.

The following information is taken from government guidance on what schools are being asked to do when they re-open to help minimise risk to the school community. We have had a few enquiries from parents/carers regarding the approach schools will take, should they be asked to re-open in the near future, so I hoped it would be helpful to include this information for your reference.

### If the decision is made for schools to start to re-open, what is the current government guidance on what this may look like for my child?

- The government recognises that early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other, and from staff, and has said that, in deciding to bring more children back to early years and primary schools, it has taken this into account.
- Schools are being advised to split the children into smaller class groups, which the government refer to as 'bubbles', with no more than 15 children in each classroom group. There will be consistency in staffing in each group **where possible**, including having the same teacher everyday (unless a job share situation is needed), and the same Teaching Assistant (TA) if one is available to provide support. Where we may not have enough teachers to allocate one per classroom group, a TA may supervise a group and will work under the direction of a class teacher. Due to the new classroom groupings/bubbles needed, it is unlikely that the children will have their usual teacher or Teaching Assistant, or be in their usual classroom if schools start to re-open after half term. (Please note that this means we may not be able to accommodate all suggested year groups back into school due to limited classrooms and staffing available. We may therefore need to prioritise year groups as **may not be able to cater for all year groups specified (Nursery/F2/Y1)**. We are awaiting guidance on this, along with other Nursery and Infant Schools who may also be facing similar challenges.
- Avoid mixing/contact between any 'bubble' group in school. The children would stay in the same group during the school day and would have minimal passing contact with children and staff from outside their own group. Staggered lunchtimes and playtimes for each 'bubble' will be needed so they have separate playtimes and areas to play in, and do not mix with other groups to minimise risk, and they will also eat lunch in their small group in their classroom base. The climbing frame/s cannot be in use at the moment, in line with government guidance.
- Staggered start and end times for the school day for each 'bubble' so parents/children have limited contact with others. As you can imagine, this will need a lot of organisation and will mean the school day will need to be adjusted for all groups, as different groups will need to be allocated different start/finish times. We appreciate this may cause inconvenience for parents, including those with children in different year groups, and we will minimise this where we can. We will also work with the Junior School to organise times that will enable parents to collect from both schools, if possible.

- Parents/carers will not be able to enter the school buildings and will drop their children off 2 metres away from the classroom doors and supervise them as they enter the classroom where their teacher will welcome them. .
- The 2 metre rule will also apply for parents/carers as they drop children off/when they are on the school yard, and children should be brought to school by one person only please. If you have other children who you cannot leave at home, you would need to ensure that they remain at least 2m from the drop off point, and from other people. Parents/carers will be advised to walk or drive to school rather than use public transport if at all possible.
- Classrooms will need to be reorganised with some toys and resources removed to avoid spread of the virus. Children will not be able to bring any toys or books etc. from home, and we will not be sending reading books home, in order to help minimise items being passed between children. We have also been advised to remove resources such as play-dough, sand, water, soft toys etc. from classrooms and regularly clean other resources used in between children using them (we will prepare a small pack per child of pen, pencil, colouring pencils and drywipe board per child that they will save in their drawer and use throughout the school day. These will not be shared).
- Children will be asked to wear machine washable uniform where possible.
- People with coronavirus symptoms should not enter the school premises.
- We will maintain frequent hand cleaning routines and good respiratory hygiene practices in school, including continuing to teach children about these using the e-bug resources shared by the government.
- Tissues will be available to 'catch it, bin it, kill it' and waste disposed of following the guidance.
- Children must bring their own, clearly labelled, drinking bottle please.
- There will be regular cleaning of the school setting, including special attention to high use items/objects like handles, switches, surface areas, toilets, taps etc.
- Internal doors will be kept open, where possible, taking into account health and safety requirements, to limit the need to touch handles and door plates.
- PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is not expected to be used in schools, other than that ordinarily used for children's personal care (apart from if someone starts to display Coronavirus symptoms).
- If anyone in the group has symptoms of Covid-19, the group will be sent home, and testing will be arranged. If any of the tests prove positive, all the children, staff and their families will have to self-isolate following government guidance. The classroom will also be deep cleaned. The local authority will also monitor schools and, if an outbreak in a specific area or school, this may lead to part or full temporary closure again to help control risk of spread.
- We will continue to organise home learning for children — those that are attending school as well as those that are at home. Teachers who are not able to be in school may be responsible for this rather than your child's class teacher. The children who come into school will complete the same learning in school that is sent home for the children who are working from home.
- Breakfast and after school clubs are not expected to be open (such as our Superkids Club and extra-curricular after school clubs) as these would require children to mix with those from different 'bubble' groups.
- Staff will also adhere to social distancing, and will maintain a 2 metres social distance from other staff who are not part of their 'bubble' group.

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

## Should I keep my child at home if they have an underlying health condition or live with someone in a clinically vulnerable group?

Schools are unable to advise on whether children with an underlying health condition should or should not attend school. We would, therefore, urge parents to seek the advice of a medical professional to find out whether their condition puts them in a 'clinically vulnerable' or 'extremely clinically vulnerable' group to decide whether it is safe for them to return to school at the moment.

The most recent Government guidance currently states -

“Children and young people who are considered extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding should continue to shield and should not be expected to attend.

Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. A minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.

Children and young people who live in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and the child or young person is able to understand and follow those instructions.

Children and young people who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) as defined in the social distancing guidance and including those who are pregnant, can attend.”

(Taken from the document <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june#should-i-keep-my-child-at-home-if-they-have-an-underlying-health-condition-or-live-with-someone-in-a-clinically-vulnerable-group>)

### Who is 'clinically extremely vulnerable'?

Expert doctors in England have identified specific medical conditions that, based on what we know about the virus so far, place someone at greatest risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

Clinically **extremely vulnerable** people may include the following. Disease severity, history or treatment levels will also affect who is in the group.

1. Solid organ transplant recipients.
2. People with specific cancers:
  - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
  - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
  - people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma at any stage of treatment
  - people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
  - people having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
  - people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs.

Cont. overleaf...

3. People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary (COPD).
4. People with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell).
5. People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
6. Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

People who fall in this group should have been contacted to tell them they are clinically extremely vulnerable.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

### **Clinically vulnerable people**

If you have any of the following health conditions, you are classed as **clinically vulnerable**, meaning you are at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. You are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if you do go out, take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household.

**Clinically vulnerable** people are those who are:

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):
  - chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
  - chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
  - chronic kidney disease
  - chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
  - chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), or cerebral palsy
  - diabetes
  - a weakened immune system as the result of certain conditions, treatments like chemotherapy, or medicines such as steroid tablets
  - being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
  - pregnant women

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

## Transition for the new academic year

Looking further ahead into the new school year, we are changing our approach towards transition this year—helping children and families prepare for their next steps, whether moving between year groups in our school or, indeed, between schools. Plans are already underway, and we will be sharing more information with you about this after half term, but I wanted to reassure you now that much is happening behind the scenes. For example -

- All school leaders in our Family of Schools have discussed this and agree that transition support for all our children is more important than ever this year, given the circumstances in which we all find ourselves. This is particularly the case for our children who are leaving nursery to start F2 at their local school, and most definitely for our Y2 children who will be due to move on to Y3.
- Mrs Shepherd, the Head of School at Halfway Juniors, and I have discussed a revised approach to Y2-Y3 transition this year and planned are some great opportunities for parents/carers and children to get all the information needed to prepare them for transition e.g. through creating virtual school tours, and virtual meetings with the Junior School , as well as sharing presentations and school information with you. We know how unsettling this time must be for both Y2 children and their parents at the moment. We appreciate how important it is to celebrate children's time with us, and we all want to help prepare pupils for their next steps as best we can in the current situation. We do understand, and just wanted to say that we are on this! More information to follow after half term.
- We have already made contact with our new Nursery and F2 children to welcome them into our school community. We will be in contact with them again after half term to complete over the phone the welcome and sharing of information that we usually do on our home and nursery visits. We are preparing some lovely resources to send out to help families familiarise themselves with new classes and year groups.
- Our Nursery team is starting to organise into two class groups the Nursery children who are due to move into F2 in September. They are experts at this as they know the children inside out! They take many things into consideration when creating the two class groups each year, for example, friendship groups in nursery, learning needs, age/term of birthday etc. They use their sound professional judgements to create class groups in which they feel their children will both be happy but also be effective learners. If you would like staff to consider any specific information as they do this, please contact us this week.

## Updates from Sheffield City Council

### Thank a Teacher Day - 20th May

Sheffield City Council is supporting **Thank a Teacher Day on 20th May** to make sure everyone working in schools and education settings is recognised for the contribution they have made.

Join them as they celebrate those making a difference in education, not only now, during these unprecedented times, but every day of the year.

[Find out how to get involved.](#)

The Thank a Teacher campaign is being led by the Teaching Awards Trust, in partnership with the DfE.

[https://thankateacher.co.uk/thank-a-teacher-day/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://thankateacher.co.uk/thank-a-teacher-day/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)





## Support for parents

We understand this is a challenging time for parents/carers, many of whom are now supporting their children's learning at home, and may have questions about their children potentially returning to school.

The council has developed the following guidance and resources for parents to support them at this time:

- Q&A which answers key questions parents may have
- Guidance for parents on phased reopening of education settings
- Guidance for parents on supporting learning at home for early years and primary age children
- List of online resources to support children's development

This information will be available with the Sheffield Star each Thursday, and on the Learn Sheffield website (<https://learnsheffield.co.uk/Covid-19>)

## Points Learning Network Games at Home 2020 - Stay Active, Get Involved!

Unfortunately, due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the Points Learning Network Games 2020 had to be cancelled. This is always one of the best days on the school calendar, and cancelling it left a big hole, with huge disappointment for many schools. **However**, an alternative version will be taking place at home if you would like to take part! There are five events for you to attempt as part of the competition. Once you have completed the events you will need to upload your score using the online score sheet. This will then be added to our school's total score. The more people in our school that take part, the more points for our school, so get your classmates and friends involved. **How it works...**

- Follow this link: <https://sites.google.com/view/points-learning-network-sports/home>
- Watch the simple videos of the rules and descriptions of the five events
- Have a practice
- Complete the five events
- Submit your score

Get your school friends to take part, the more people scoring points for your school, the more chance there is of your school winning. Please only upload one set of scores per person per day. Keep checking who is winning!



You have until 24th May to get your entries in. Tweet your attempts using [@PointsLN](#) and [@HalfwayNI](#)

## Extreme Reading Challenge



**Where is the most extreme place you ever read a book?** Whether you are jumping on a trampoline or on your daily run in the garden, we want to see your **extreme reading** photographs. To take part all you need to do is take a photo reading a book of your choice in an unusual place. Make sure to stay safe but have fun finding all the weird and wacky places to read. Please send your photos to the home learning email [homelearning@halfway-inf.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:homelearning@halfway-inf.sheffield.sch.uk) with the subject 'Extreme Reading Challenge'. All entries to be submitted by Monday 1st June and winners will be chosen for each year group with a special prize! Photographs will also be used as part of an extreme reading display within our school library.

Can't wait to see your entries! From Mrs Timmons

**Please take care, stay safe and do keep in touch.**

**Kindest regards,**

**Paula Bestall**

# O<sub>2</sub> | NSPCC

Let's keep kids safe online

The internet offers endless possibilities for kids to play, create, learn and connect. But there are also risks.

Our simple, practical information and advice can help you make sure your kids can safely navigate the online world – working as a **TEAM**:

**T**alking openly and regularly about what they're doing online

**E**xploring what your child enjoys doing online together

**A**greeing rules and boundaries

**M**anaging settings and controls



# O<sub>2</sub> | NSPCC

Let's keep kids safe online



## Get support

Head to **Net-Aware.org.uk** for bitesize info and advice about the latest social networks, apps and games kids are using.

Our online safety parent workshops provide practical tips. Contact **parentworkshops@nspcc.org.uk**

Play our **Parents vs Kids quiz** designed to start the conversation about your child's online world. Visit **o2.uk/PlayParentsvsKids**

For **advice** on parental controls, setting up your child's phone or a social network, O2's **technical advisors** are here to help. Call O2 free on: 0808 800 5002 or book an appointment with us in store.

**Resources** for parents and teachers are also available by calling our free advice line on: 0808 800 5002.