



Dear Parents/Carers

1st June 2020

In this letter you will find information outlining the plans that the Leaders and Governing Board have agreed in order to work towards wider re-opening of Ewell Grove from today. There are sections of this document that were extremely challenging to write, as elements go against everything Ewell Grove holds dear. Leaders have been mindful of the Government DfE guidance, but have also paid particularly close attention to medical research/information to formulate our planning. Please be aware that further changes to practicalities are inevitable as the school will have to evolve and adapt at each stage.

Ewell Grove's Leaders and Governing Board have agreed priority of places, as part of our wider re-opening strategy, as follows:

- Phase 1: Critical Worker and other priority children (as identified by DfE and Ewell Grove)
- Phase 2: Year 1 (*four days per alternate week*)
- Phase 3: Reception (*four days per alternate week*)

Current Proposed Timetable for Re-opening

NB: Schools days will be 8.30am – 3.00pm or 8.45am – 3.15pm or 9.00am – 3.30pm

Week Beg.	Classes		
1st June	Open for Critical Worker (CW) and other Priority Children (PC) Staff conducting 'Return to School Conversations'		
Review of CW & PC numbers. Risk Assessment – amend or change as required			
8th June	Expanding to seven 'Bubbles' for Critical Workers and other Priority Children	<i>If space/staffing allows</i> - Re-Opening to Hedgehog Bubbles A, B and C - (3 groups) Monday 8 th June to Thursday 11 th June	
Friday 12th June to Sunday 14th June Hedgehog rooms cleaned and left for 72hrs			
Review of CW & PC numbers. Risk Assessment – amend or change as required			
15th June	Maintaining <i>at least</i> seven 'Bubbles' for Critical Workers and other Priority Children	<i>If space/staffing allows</i> - Re-Opening to Squirrel Bubbles A, B and C - (3 groups) Monday 15 th June to Thursday 18 th June	
Friday 19th June to Sunday 21st June Squirrel rooms cleaned and left for 72hrs			
Review of CW & PC numbers. Risk Assessment – amend or change as required			
22nd June	Maintaining <i>at least</i> seven 'Bubbles' for Critical Workers and other Priority Children	<i>If space/staffing allows</i> Hedgehog Bubbles A, B and C - (3 groups) Monday 22 nd June to Thursday 25 th June	<i>If space/staffing allows</i> - Re-Opening to Badger Bubbles A & B - (2 groups) Monday 22 nd June to Thursday 25 th June
Friday 26th June to Sunday 28th June Hedgehog & Badger rooms cleaned and left for 72hrs			
Review of CW & PC numbers. Risk Assessment – amend or change as required			
29th June	Maintaining <i>at least</i> seven 'Bubbles' for Critical Workers and other Priority Children	<i>If space/staffing allows</i> Squirrel Bubbles A, B and C - (3 groups) Monday 29 th June to Thursday 2 nd July	<i>If space/staffing allows</i> - Re-Opening to Rabbit Bubbles A & B - (2 groups) Monday 29 th June to Thursday 2 nd July
Friday 3rd July to Sunday 5th July Squirrel & Rabbit rooms cleaned and left for 72hrs			
Review of CW & PC numbers. Risk Assessment – amend or change as required			
6 th July	To be advised		
13 th July			

NB: This document only applies to Phase 1 of Ewell Grove's wider re-opening plan; it will be reissued as further phases are included.

With the gradual easing of the lockdown, Ewell Grove has seen rapidly increasing numbers of Critical Workers returning to their respective workplace and therefore need for places in this category has already become much more significant.

The decision that Ewell Grove has taken in regard to the priority in which year groups will be invited to re-join, has been based on the demographic needs of children within each year group and not age. *Please note other children, including siblings of pupils in Year 1 and Reception, are not currently eligible for a place at school.* Our approach will be phased, using a Risk Assessment, and additional children will only re-enter when we are as sure as we can be that it is both safe and sustainable. Our final decisions will be based upon the safety of our children, staff and wider school community; coupled with the staffing and space that we have available to us at any one time.

We are acutely aware that we have two major forces currently working against us; confidence and time. Having surveyed Nursery, Reception and Year 1 it is obvious that there is already a complete spectrum of opinions, viewpoints and needs our families are looking for our re-opening to fulfil. We know, therefore, that this will be impossible for us to achieve. We must respect that everyone is entitled to have their own perspective on how our school should re-open, or not, and never think our own standpoint is any more valid than another's. Our task is to build confidence, create trust and provide choice. We will aim to offer more children (from priority groups) some time back at school before the end of the summer term; rather than less children more time. Operating a rota system of, one week on and one week off, is the only way to achieve this. This will be a four-day offer (Monday to Thursday), as studies of the virus demonstrate that the risk of contamination, from an environment, is reduced significantly after 72 hours.

One aspect everyone will agree with is that we need to work together to ensure the safest possible situation for everyone, however we all need to be absolutely clear that we all understand that robust Social Distancing with such young children is impossible. Therefore, the key safety measures that we can put in place are:

- Following Government advice that the necessary 'tests' have been met that allow schools to re-open more widely.
- Make certain that nobody that has symptoms, lives in a household with anyone else with symptoms or is shielding attend our site – using access to testing as and when required.
- Do everything possible to apply a Social Distancing model; *even though this cannot be 100% guaranteed.*
- Maintain high levels of personal hygiene by washing their hands regularly; we expect that this will be at least 5-6 times per day, children may bring their own hand-cream if this causes skin problems.
- Ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- Cleaning frequently touched surfaces and regularly leaving areas where the children/staff have used free from human contact for 72 hours.
- Keeping new Bubbles constant and endeavouring to keep the staff of these unchanged wherever we are able.
- Minimising contact and reducing class sizes (according to space available), altering (as much as possible) the environment such as classroom layout and changing timetables/staggering arrival/drop off, playtimes/lunchtimes.
- Ventilation will be used with windows and external doors opened when it is safe and appropriate to do so; we also intend to use our outdoor spaces for learning as well as break times as much as possible.

Whilst keeping everyone physically well, we also want to try and create an environment that the children are reasonably familiar with using the largest spaces we have. We know the

imperative of keeping children and staff happy/relaxed in order to stay emotionally well throughout this process.

From 1st June, Ewell Grove will change the practicalities for accommodating children during the school day. Social Distancing requirements mean that a maximum number of children, based on space, will only use one room moving forward. Lower child to staff ratio requires dividing classes into newly formed groups; we call these 'Bubbles'. This means children will only spend their school day in one group, with no cross-over with other groups. Bubbles will arrive/leave at different times, use different entrances/exits, eat their lunch separately, stay in their own play areas and only be taught by one set of staff (the staff will be on a two-week rotation). Critical Worker families, with children in R and Yr1, have already been asked to think further ahead and decide if they want their child to remain within this group. They will NOT be allowed to re-join a Bubble; once in a group they will not be allowed to swap at any point before September.

Similarly, as we increase the number of 'Bubbles' across the weeks we will have different arrangements and locations for drop off and pick up. Once we have confirmed numbers of returning Critical Workers, and other priority children, we will be able to be more specific about this. Please ensure you understand that siblings, childminder groups etc. may not be in a 'family group' and therefore pick-up and drop off may be at separate locations and times from their siblings.

Rearranged Classes

Please ensure that your child fully understands, that when they return to school, there is a higher than average probability that they will not be in their classroom or with their teacher. We will endeavour to ensure that everyone has one or two friends they will be happy with. However, different staff are likely to be helping your child with their learning. **Ewell Grove Staff will decide the groups, staffing and classrooms. Nobody will be allowed to change Bubble at any point before September.**

Staffing Plans

Ewell Grove has a reasonable number of staff who have been instructed by their clinicians to shield or remain working from home. We have also advised staff who are pregnant not to attend. Equally we have others who are living with someone in their household who fall into these categories.

It is still highly likely that over the coming weeks we will have staff who become unwell or need to isolate because someone else in their home develops symptoms. We will therefore be working in staff teams, that do not cross over, to minimise the number of staff on site at any one time. Please remember our first priority will be to maintain a rota of staff to cover our Priority 1 'Bubbles', therefore we will not continue to 're-open' year groups if numbers in this priority do not allow us to do so.

If circumstances require us to take emergency action then we will use our Parentmail text and email alerts to notify parents of any changes.

Infection Control/Social Distancing

The DfE guidance is very clear that schools are not being expected to maintain 2m spaces between people and we want to be up front from the start that it will be impossible to do this at all times.

Anybody, child or adult, who displays symptoms will be sent home. Moving forward both adults and children (aged 5 and over) will be eligible for testing and therefore it will be our policy that they will not be able to return to school until they have been cleared or have gone through the subsequent isolation period.

Parents/Carers will be expected to ensure that there is never a time that they are not contactable and an adult available to collect a child within 45 minutes of receiving a call from school. If a child needs to go home because of symptoms, we will have an area that is not used for anything else where the child will be isolated whilst being supervised by an adult. Please be aware staff will use Personal Protective Equipment in this situation, including face coverings, if being exposed to coughing. Weather permitting, isolation will take place outside. Any siblings on site at the time will also be isolated and need to be taken off site until they have been cleared or have gone through the subsequent isolation period.

If there is a confirmed case in school, we will enact policies to test and/or isolate the rest of the staff and children in that Bubble and all parents will be informed. *Please understand in certain circumstance this could result in the school being required to close again completely.*

Classrooms for Nursery, Reception and Year 1 will be 'deep-cleaned' at the end of every Thursday session and closed off to everyone for a minimum of 72hrs. In addition, these rooms will be prioritised for cleaning each day with specific focus on contact points such as equipment and door handles. Each Bubble will have their own First Aid Kits to avoid cross-contamination between Bubble groups.

In order to ensure the safety of the rest of the school community it is vital that any parents choosing to send their child to school respect all Government guidance and are not mixing with others outside of their household beyond the current regulations. *If school has evidence that this is not the case, we reserve the right to not provide places for those children.*

Although we do not expect this to be the case, where any child is unable to follow the protocols that are put in place for the safety of everyone, we will have to ask parents to keep that child at home.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Although we will have a stock of PPE in place (aprons, gloves and face-masks), the guidance is clear that this is not something we should use regularly. Children will not be allowed to wear face-masks due to the increased risks that incorrect use brings. As part of our protocols, staff will use gloves for certain tasks before and after school (cleaning of resources etc.), but during the school day limiting contact, handwashing and good hygiene will be the priority.

Pick-up and Drop-Offs

Only one parent must ever attend pickups and drop offs. Please DO NOT bring scooters/bikes etc. as we will not allow them to come onto site to be stored currently. Families need to wait two metres apart from one another whilst waiting and must not congest 'The Grove' or disrupt other village users not connected with our school. ***We reserve the right to not provide places for children where the adult accompanying them is not complying with wider Government guidance related to Social Distancing. The success of keeping our school as safe as it can be is dependent on everyone following current societal expectations.***

No parent will be allowed on site without a prior appointment and the school gates will be locked at all times. A specific drop off and collection time will be provided to each Bubble group. ***Anyone who is late for their group pick-up or drop off will have to wait until all other groups have entered/left before being assisted.*** We will use different gates and doors for each group and will have a member of staff outside to ensure protocols are followed. The staff leading the group will be inside ready to receive the children. As parents will not be able to come onto the playground; their child must be able to walk from the gate to their entrance point independently.

We need to be clear all children, including the youngest, must be able to do this for themselves staff will not 'peel' children off parents as we sometimes do normally. We will not be able to take children by the hand, so we would ask parents to work with their children to prepare them for the drop-off. If this is proving difficult, please find a safe space and take time with your child to give them the extra reassurance they need to come into the building by themselves.

Communication

Please remember our phone lines and emails remain open to all our families. All of you can ask us for help/assistance/support at any point that you may be feeling under increasing duress for any reason.

Further specific information on 'bubbles', staffing and classrooms will be sent prior to your child starting. We will also include a resource that we would ask you to share with your child in order to help them prepare for the changes.

Playtimes/Lunchtimes

We will be staggering breaks and lunchtimes. Children will be encouraged to maintain Social Distancing as much as possible. You, like us, may have seen pictures of schools in other countries where children were sitting in marked out two metre squares and be worried about the emotional effect this might have. Ewell Grove will not use this strategy. We will endeavour to limit the sharing of equipment/resources to avoid cross-contamination, but not all our children will necessarily remember this every second of the day; so this cannot be guaranteed.

Catering

We are only going to allow packed lunches for the time-being; to eradicate the need for cutlery. Universal Free School Meals for children in R, Yr1 & Yr 2 and Free School Meal eligibility still apply to relevant children attending; this will be supplied by Aspens our school meal provider with usual arrangements for allergies etc. You are welcome to send a packed lunch from home. However, do not send in anything the children cannot open for themselves. By keeping to packed lunches it will be much easier to distribute and reduce the number of staff involved and keep distancing measures in place.

Packed lunches must not contain drinks, sweets, nuts or peanut butter; please refer to 'A healthy lunch box' available on our school website. Water will be provided by the school. Please ensure your child's name is clearly written on the outside of your child's lunch box to reduce the need for handling.

Curriculum

The school groups will follow the same planning that is provided to children at home in our Learning from Home section (on our school website). Our staff have already planned for these weeks as we are acutely aware that a significant percentage of our children are still not eligible to attend in person. Teachers will be designing the days to keep them as simple as possible. We want to do everything we can to keep the classrooms happy and relaxed whilst still learning and being constructive.

All Bubbles will continue to access a regular session with Gavin, our Sports Coach, who will be directing the staff whilst maintaining his distance, to ensure the maximum number of Bubbles benefit across each day.

Classroom Layouts

During the week commencing 1st June staff will be trialling the best possible layouts for each classroom. We will endeavour to keep internal doors open at all times to avoid the use of handles and adults will be wiping handles and surfaces throughout the day.

Emergency Procedures

Our normal emergency procedures will remain in place so that the children remain confident in an emergency. Staff will talk through these with the children and discuss how the risk from these events considerably outweighs the risk associated with Covid-19.

Signage

We will continue to have hand-washing guides up in appropriate areas and may have some child-friendly distancing signs that the DfE have issued. Beyond these, due to the small number of people and small areas involved, there are no current plans to mark out floors or add signage to the school. If the drop-off and pick-up times cannot be made to work through clear protocols, we may then have to introduce signage and markings; but we have all seen how ineffective this can be in local supermarkets. Ewell Grove has decided to focus their time and resources on learning and implementing a clear routine.

Resources

Each child will have their own set of equipment in their tray at their own table. This will generally only be used by one child; but with our youngest children we cannot guarantee this! Where the children use other equipment such as reading books and PE resources, they will be used by one child and then placed in the resources box for that day, these will be cleaned and then not be used again for 72 hours. Please note we are unable to send reading books home currently and therefore children should not bring their book bag to school with them.

Uniform and Items from Home

Children are expected to attend in school uniform, but wear trainers (do not send a PE kit in with them). They may also continue to bring in a named water bottle, coat and sun hat when necessary. However, from 1st June they are unable to leave their scooters onsite.

Other than those items described above, please leave everything else at home including book bags and toys. If you think leaving a special toy may be difficult you could allow them to 'walk' your child to school, say goodbye at the entrance, and then have them ready to collect at the end of the day!

Now that we are having some summer weather please help your children to follow the Four S's of Sun Safety:

1. **S**lop on your sunscreen
2. **S**lip into your uniform
3. **S**lap your hat on
4. **S**eek shade

An application of high factor sunscreen must be **administered by parents before school**.

A reminder that our school uniform policy states that school shoes must be worn; open-toed sandals must not be worn to school as they are not safe in a classroom setting or whilst running in the playground. Children are asked to only wear trainers.

Equally please ensure that you provide any medication, and the accompanying Health Care Plan, that your child requires. It is essential that they have this with them on the first day that they attend/return.

Visitors

We will have no unplanned visitors to the school; only planned visitors for necessary tasks such as essential maintenance. Where we do need to have a visitor they will undertake their

visit away from everyone else with strict distancing, hand-washing and all other infection control measures in place. Regular visitors such as our music teachers will not be coming in. Unfortunately, parents are included in this protocol and will not be allowed onto the school site.

There are currently no Before/After School Club, school clubs or lettings running.

Parents

We fully appreciate that Learning from Home is a very different experience for our children, but equally their parents. I know, whatever approach you have chosen, you will have done a fantastic job. Sadly, it appears that too often today people only ever feel confident when trying to copy and measure themselves against someone or something else. Please feel empowered to make your own informed autonomous decisions about how you and your child can continue to achieve the best over the coming weeks. Not doing the same as another does not equate to “being left behind”... what if your approach is actually better?

We can see from the amazing range and ingenuity of Learning from Home activities that have been shared, along with the numerous communications we have had with families over the past weeks, that everyone has and will continue to do their best. All children must be encouraged to adapt to learning in a range of ways; this not only builds their resilience but equally their ability to adjust and thrive in inevitable times of change. All research clearly demonstrates that being outside in the sunshine classifying ‘bugs’ will stimulate better memory retention in your child than can ever be achieved through sitting in front of a screen, piece of paper or listening to somebody talk.

“I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand” - Confucius

Teachers Want to Teach

In the end it will be the quality of our relationships that will give everyone the confidence to take the initial steps to re-opening that will ultimately result in Ewell Grove being fully open. Getting our schools back is the shared goal of every Headteacher and Governing Board across our country. However, to not do so safely would be neglecting our fundamental duty of care. Whatever the front pages of our national press print in their headlines, I can assure you that, in my role as the Chair of Surrey’s Primary Phase Council, I have worked with Surrey County Council to support every Primary School in our County at every stage of this pandemic – there is not one who is not committed to getting their children safely back through their school gates... but it will look different for each and every one of us.

I hope that this information gives our eligible families the information they need to be able to make a final choice about their child restarting school. Please be assured that whatever your decision we will support you, please do whatever you believe is best for your own child and family. Further information will be sent out prior to your child starting with details of the final logistical arrangements that must be adhered to.

Please be rest assured that the Ewell Grove staff team are working tirelessly to ensure that everything we do is as safe as possible, but are also determined to try and limit the worry and anxiety both our children and families will undoubtedly be feeling.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Kate Keane
Headteacher