

20.5.20

Dear Parent/Carer,

We hope that you and your family are well, and coping in these challenging and unprecedented times.

Our school has been open for the children of key workers and vulnerable children since the lockdown began on 23rd March, and staff have been supporting the home learning of children who have not been in school. We are very grateful to you for the support that you have provided for your child/children over this difficult period.

Following the government’s announcement of its intention to begin the phased opening of schools from 1st June 2020, Plymouth CAST Multi Academy Trust has taken the following decisions about the opening of its schools.

Plymouth CAST will only consider the opening of its schools once invited to do so by the government on or after the 1st June, 2020, and once the government’s 5 tests for moving to the next phase have been satisfied. Furthermore, each of our schools is required to complete a comprehensive risk assessment and planning process that will be approved by the Headteacher, Trust Education and Standards Manager, and Trust Director of Education before it is authorised to open.

The Trust will continue to work with our school leaders, staff, professional associations, local authorities, the Regional Schools Commissioner and government to ensure that the re-opening of our schools takes place at the right time and in the right way for the health, welfare and safety of our children, students and staff.

After careful consideration and extensive discussion, the Trust has directed its schools to begin its phased opening in the following way:

* In-school care provision for the children of key workers and vulnerable children from all year groups will continue.
* Any model of opening must include Year Six
* Where it is safe to do so provision must include Nursery, Reception and Year 1, or any safe combination of these year groups.
* No year group other than those specified by the government, N, R, Y1 and Y6 is able to return to school at this stage.

It is important to note that the Trust’s directive and the local planning decisions of the school may change due to guidance from the government, the local authority, Public Health England, and other appropriate agencies. The government’s date of 1st June for the phased re-opening of schools is only provisional and subject to the nature of the pandemic and national control measures as we approach that date.

Thank you for helping us to predict expected numbers over the last few days. For those of you whose children are attending on June 1st, in Maple and Elm class there is only one group of children per class with a maximum of 10 children in a group. In Year 6 we have 2 groups of 10 children and our key worker’s group has 15 children. The children will stay in their groups and not mix with other groups even at playtimes. We would like to make you aware of the measures we are putting in place to ensure all of us are as safe as possible:

* Children will **not** be expected to wear school uniform due to the importance of daily washing of clothes being worn to school.
* **Maple class** will enter and be picked up via the side entrance gate (from main car park area) by Sycamore classroom. Please practise social distancing rules when waiting.
* **Elm class** will arrive and be picked up from the usual school gate. Parents will need to social distance outside or wait in cars as one child comes through the gate at a time.
* **Y6** will enter and leave school via the **staff car park** into either the Y6 classroom gate or the field gate area – you will be guided as to which by staff.
* **Key worker’s children** from Y2,3, 4 & 5 will use the usual main entrance gate but are asked to arrive a**t 8:40 am** and picked up at 3:10 pm (unless they have a sibling in one of the other year groups and they can arrive together at the later time)
* Maple, Elm & Y6 children are asked to **arrive at 8:50 am** and to be picked up between 3 & 3:10 pm. Y6 walkers will leave last.
* Parents are encouraged not to come through the entrance gates but we will obviously let you through if your child is visibly upset at you leaving.
* Breakfast club and after school club will not be available due to the risk of mixing groups.
* All children will be given hand sanitiser as they enter school before going into their classrooms where they will be asked one by one to wash their hands thoroughly.
* Please can each child bring their own pencil case with pencil, rubber and some colouring pencils/ crayons/ felt tips inside – this will be left in school on their desks for their use each day.
* We would ask that children bring the minimum amount possible to school i.e. lunch box, drink and returned reading books every Monday. (No toys, games, balls etc. please)
* For those in Maple and Elm class who would like to receive the universal school meals (which will be packed lunches), you need to **order these from Chartwell’s website by May 24th**.
* The children will eat their lunches in their classrooms and have a designated play zone for their group on the playground.
* Reading books for Maple & Elm class: each Monday, children return books from home and will be given another 3 books to be returned the following Monday.
* Reading Books for Y6 & key workers: children are asked to bring their own books in to read themselves.
* All classes will have hand washing facilities for the children to wash their hands at regular intervals throughout the day, but especially before and after break times.
* Desks, chairs, door handles and light switches will be wiped down at break times.
* All children will work at desks spaced 2metres apart.
* Role play areas, sand trays, water trays and book corners will be removed from classrooms
* Any toys that are used will be wiped down after each session and cleaned in the dishwasher at the end of each day.
* Toilets will be cleaned midday and the end of each day and children will use a designated toilet for their group, one at a time.

We are very grateful to you for your support and understanding as we try to manage this situation in the best interests of our children, families, staff and the national COVID-19 recovery plan.

Yours sincerely,

 G Christopher

Raymond Friel Gerardine Christopher

CEO, Plymouth CAST Headteacher, St Mary & St Joseph’s