



ROBERT MELLORS PRIMARY ACADEMY

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Dear Parents/Carers,

Following the announcement by the Prime Minister on Sunday 10th May regarding the phased opening of schools for more pupils, school leaders have been given further details and documents which outline the protective measures which should be in place to ensure the safety of all children and staff.

On Sunday, the Prime Minister announced that schools should begin to welcome children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 back to school from June 1st. On Monday, it became clear that in addition to these year groups, that Nursery aged children were also included in this list. Since March 23rd, school has been open every week day, including over the Easter holidays, for a small group of children which includes those of key workers. This provision will still continue from June 1st.

Since Monday evening, I have been working hard to create a plan which prioritises the health and safety of children and staff at school within the parameters of the government guidance. I feel that it is important that you understand some of this detail.

Year group sizes at Robert Mellors Primary Academy vary. For the identified year groups, numbers are as follows;

Year 6	31 children
Year 1	45 children
Reception	21 children
Nursery	69 children (a mixture of full and part-time)
Key worker group	Currently 15 children – this is likely to increase

Government guidance on the protective measures that should be in place include:

- Avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms – anyone with symptoms should not come to the school site
- Frequent hand washing
- Minimising contact and mixing between people
- Keeping children 2m apart where possible – altering classroom furniture as appropriate
- Staggered drop-off and pick-up times
- Plan drop-off and pick-up arrangements to minimise adult to adult contact (only one parent to drop off their child and to avoid bringing other children – where possible)
- Remove unnecessary items from classrooms including certain toys and soft furnishings
- Keep children in the same, small groups at all times each day – groups should not come in to contact with each other, even at playtimes
- Keep the same staff with each group throughout each day where possible



- Keeping children in the same classroom each day where they will also eat their lunch
- Limiting children using toilets to doing so one at a time
- Limiting the sharing of equipment and regular cleaning of this
- Where more than one group use the same space (for example, part-time children in Foundation Stage), this space, and any equipment that has been used, should be cleaned, including the toilets

Earlier this week I sent you this guidance for parents and carers;

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

However, I am aware that you will have many questions about how, as a school, these measures will be applied. I have endeavoured to answer some of these questions – hopefully you will find this useful.

Will my child be in their own class?

Your child will be in a class with up to 14 children from their year group/class. They may be taught by their own class teacher. We will endeavour to place children with their friends where possible. Teaching staff should be familiar to the children for each group.

Will my child be in their own classroom?

It will not be possible for all children to be in their own classroom spaces.

Will the children be using the same toilets?

Groups of children will be allocated toilets to use. There will only be designated boys/girls' toilets for the children in Y6. Children will only be allowed to leave the classroom or playground **one at a time** to use the toilet.

Will everyone be wearing face masks and gloves?

No. Staff who are tending to children who need to be changed during the day will wear protective clothing. If a child becomes ill, the staff member who is looking after them until they are collected will wear a mask and gloves.

Will the children be able to play together outside?

Children will only be able to play with children from their group. They will have a designated outdoor space to play in. Children from different groups will not be allowed to mix at any time during the school day.

Will social distancing be applied?

The government have recognised that early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. The recommendation is that classes are split into groups of no more than 15 children and that they are seated as far apart as the classroom space will allow. We plan on each child sitting at a table by themselves. There will be a teacher and a teaching assistant allocated to each class.

What will happen if my child becomes ill at school?

If a child becomes ill, they will be isolated, behind a closed door and with appropriate adult supervision. The adult will then wear PPE – face mask and gloves. Self-isolation rules should then be applied for that child and their family and a test should be requested. If there is a confirmed case of coronavirus, all children and adults within that child's group should self-isolate for 14 days.



What will the school day be like for my child?

The curriculum will focus on PSHE learning for all children – we recognise that the children will need time to settle in to the new way of life at school. Teachers will plan learning for the children in line with expectations for their year group. Children in Y1 and Y6 will be learning at tables. Children in EYFS will be allowed to access the curriculum through the normal means but with greater limitations on the toys and equipment they use.

Will school dinner arrangements be the same as normal?

Children will eat their lunches at their tables in the classrooms. We are waiting for further information from our catering service regarding this.

What are the arrangements for dropping children off at school?

Start and finish times will be staggered to avoid congestion. We will be asking parents to stick closely to these timings. Where possible, parents will be asked to come by themselves to drop their child off. If you have children in more than one year group, you should arrive at the earliest arranged time to drop off all the children together.

Entrances to the school site and building will be designated to avoid groups congregating.

Does my child have to return to school? What will happen if I choose to keep them at home?

Children from the priority year groups are encouraged to attend school. There will be no penalty for parents who choose not to send their children to school.

What if I need to speak to my child's teacher?

We will ask you to contact the school office by telephone or email to talk to your child's teacher or to pass on a message.

My child isn't in one of the identified year groups, will they still have learning to do at home?

Yes – learning to do at home will continue to be provided.

RMPS will open for more children on 1st June if the government tell us that it is safe for us to do so.

The government have directed schools to prioritise the youngest children when planning the phased return to ensure that the safety of children is prioritised. **This means that we have taken the decision to open school on Monday 1st June to children in Nursery, Foundation, Year 1 and for those in the key worker group.**

Once we have a clear picture of how our protective measures are working for this group of children, we then will work towards bringing the Year 6 children in to school hopefully later in that week.

I will be in contact with you to share further details over the next week.

Best wishes

Mrs Essex

