

The Bliss Charity School



Phased Re-opening from 1st June 2020

Information Booklet for Parents/Carers

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1. Introduction and principles

The purpose of this booklet is to provide families with information about how we plan to re-open to Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from 1st June 2020, whilst still supporting home learning for those not in school and continuing to provide care for vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers.

It is very important that ALL parents/carers read the WHOLE of this booklet very carefully.

In trying to carry out the Government's instructions, the health and safety of the entire Bliss community – children, staff, parents, visitors, contractors and community members – is our main concern and this underpins every decision that has been (and will be) made.

2. Disclaimer

Families need to be aware that our plans are **subject to change** and it is very important that parents/carers make employers aware of this fact if they will be relying on the school to enable them to return to work. The Government says that its decision to re-open schools from 1st June is conditional on the scientific advice they take nearer the proposed re-opening date – at the time of writing, it is believed this will happen towards the end of the half term week (23/05/20 – 31/05/20).

Also, there could be changes that we need to make to our plans following further guidance from the DfE – the Department's advice is being updated frequently and we are doing our very best to keep up with it. In addition, our plans are subject to our own staffing availability now and in the near future. Therefore, whilst the plans outlined in this booklet are correct at the time of writing, it is possible things will change.

3. Government guidance

The Department for Education (DfE) has instructed schools to plan to welcome more children back to the classroom from the week commencing 1st June 2020.

In our planning, we have used the following Government guidance and parents/carers can read this to help them understand what we are being asked to do:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/actions-for-education-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/opening-schools-for-more-children-and-young-people-initial-planning-framework-for-schools-in-england>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings-including-the-use-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

These documents are being updated on a regular basis and school leaders will continue to respond to amendments and updates as they are provided. It is also possible that the DfE will issue new guidance in addition to the resources listed above. If this is the case, these will be used to shape our plans too.

4. Risk assessment

Our risk assessment for re-opening adheres to all of the DfE's requirements published to date – this has been written in consultation with all staff and reviewed by representatives of the Governing Body.

For transparency, a copy of our risk assessment has been uploaded to our school website – please visit: <https://www.bliss.northants.sch.uk/index.php/parents/phased-re-opening-june-2020>. However, it must be recognised that – whilst this is a very detailed and comprehensive document – our risk assessment is 'on-going' and operational changes will be made before (and after) re-opening on 1st June so that it reflects the best possible practice in education settings. It is anticipated that any changes to our risk assessment from now on will affect the finer details of the plan rather than the broad, strategic structure.

5. Safety measures

In all education, childcare and social care settings, preventing the spread of coronavirus involves dealing with direct transmission (for instance, when in close contact with those sneezing and coughing) and indirect transmission (via touching contaminated surfaces).

A range of infection protection and control measures have been established in readiness for welcoming Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 back to school from 1st June. These safety procedures stem from the following four guiding principles, as set out by the DfE:

1. Avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
2. Frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices
3. Regular cleaning of settings
4. Minimising contact and mixing

Our risk assessment provides specific details of Bliss' planned conformity to these infection protection and control measures – please visit: <https://www.bliss.northants.sch.uk/index.php/parents/phased-re-opening-june-2020>.

6. Reception, Year 1 and Year 6

On 1st June, The Bliss Charity School will re-open to all children from Reception, Year 1 and Year 6.

Why are these year groups being asked to return first?

*'[These] three year groups [...] have been prioritised because they are key transition years – children in Reception and Year 1 are at the very beginning of their school career and are mastering the essential basics, including counting and the fundamentals of reading and writing, and learning to socialise with their peers [...] attending early education lays the foundation for lifelong learning and supports children's social and emotional development. Year 6 children are finishing Key Stage 2 and are preparing for the transition to secondary school, and will benefit immensely from time with their friends and teachers to ensure they are ready.'*¹

6.1 Class groups

Every pupil in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 can return to school from 1st June, Monday – Friday. However, due to infection protection and control measures (principle 4 – see section 5 above), children in these classes will not be able to return as whole class cohorts. Instead, these classes will return in smaller groups of up to 15 (maximum).

Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 have each been split into two groups. All groups will be taught by one of their regular classroom adults (the class teacher will be with one group and the class teaching assistant will be with the other). However, the work in both groups, will be planned by the class teacher and taught under their instruction.

In addition, each group has an additional adult to help manage social distancing, provide support for their colleagues and be available to meet the social, emotional and mental health needs children may present. Therefore, while

¹ See 'Year groups in first phase of wider opening' in <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/actions-for-education-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>.

socially distanced, there is a good ratio of staff-to-pupils for most of the week which will ensure contact and mixing is contained within the group and enhanced hygiene and cleaning practices can be undertaken.

Requests regarding the groups to which children are allocated will not be granted. Group allocations will be shared with families in a separate communication. The email will state whether children are in Class 6A, Class 6B, Class 1A, Class 1B, Class Reception A or Class Reception B.

6.2 Staggered school days

While full time school hours will be provided for these groups, there will be staggered drop-offs and collections, as instructed by the DfE. Again, this is to minimise contact between pupils and amongst parents/carers and the wider community. The timings for each group's school day will be as follows:

- Class 6A (8:00 am – 2:15 pm)
- Class 6B (8:10 am – 2:25 pm)
- Class 1A (8:20 am – 2:35 pm)
- Class 1B (8:30 am – 2:45 pm)
- Class Reception A (8:40 am – 2:55 pm)
- Class Reception B (8:50 am – 3:05 pm)
- Vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers in Years 2/3/4/5 (9:00 am – 3:15 pm)

The layout of our premises does not easily allow for socially distanced arrival/collection arrangements at the beginning/end of the day, so a 'welcome area' will be established on the village green, opposite the school, for the children to join their group line.² Utilising the village green will allow us to spread the groups out at spaced intervals and enable parents/carers to maintain the two metre rule amongst each other. Moreover, this approach will not impede pavements or prevent other members of the community from going about their business.

Children **must** be present in the 'welcome area' **on time** in order for the social distancing timetable to work. Children can arrive up to five minutes before their allocated start time, but no earlier, and they **cannot be late**. Children should be brought to school by only one adult, without siblings, if possible. Only pupils in Class 6A, Class 6B, Class 1A, Class 1B, Class Reception A or Class Reception B will be permitted to enter the 'welcome area' – please see section 6.10 for parents'/carers' responsibilities. Please note that children will not be allowed into school early if it is raining – please dress suitably according to the weather.

Additional school staff will be present to facilitate safe road crossing when group lines are due to go into school. On entry to the school building, children and adults will be required to use hand sanitiser before making their way to their classroom.

The same protective measures will be in place for collection.

6.3 Social distancing throughout the day

Once at school, staggered break times and lunch times will also be in operation and timetables have been set to ensure groups do not mix throughout the day. Classrooms will be re-organised to allow for social distancing guidelines too.

To support these measures (and make them worthwhile), the Government says that parents/carers should ensure that pupils do not mix beyond their allocated groups outside of school hours – this is for the protection of all other pupils and their families, as well as staff and their families.

² Arrival/collection on the back playground for will not be possible because this area will be split into separate zones to enable socially distanced break and lunch times.

6.4 The curriculum

Whilst new timetabling and protection and control measures will limit teaching methods and prevent access to some curriculum activities, staff will endeavour to provide a range of broad and balanced learning experiences while also focussing on making progress in the core areas after a sustained period of time away from school. Equally, staff will be aware of the social, emotional and mental health needs of pupils when they return.

Although disappointing, most of the traditional summer term activities and highlights will not be possible this year because of the strict requirements schools are being asked to operate under.

6.5 Behaviour

School staff will help children adapt to the protection and control measures in place at school, teaching them the importance of regular cleaning, good hand and respiratory hygiene, and social distancing – please see section 6.11 for pupils' responsibilities.

Please be aware that if any child wilfully and repeatedly disobeys the protection and control measures put in place to keep them – and others – safe, parents/carers may be asked to collect their child from school.

6.6 Uniform and kit

When children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 return, they will need to wear full school uniform and bring the following items in a school bag (one bag per child please):

- Trainers (not a PE kit to begin with)
- Packed lunch (optional)
- Bottled drink
- Snack (there will be no snack facilities available at school)
- Pencil case containing own stationery (e.g. pencils, ruler, sharpener, rubber and colouring pencils/pens) – this is not a 'compulsory item', but it is 'preferred item' as it will reduce the amount of equipment used by others that your child is required to handle.

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 should return their school reading books when they come back to school. These should be deposited in the collection box at the front door of the school building next to the hand sanitiser table.

6.7 Hot meals

When we re-open, *SchoolGrid* should be up and running as usual for parents/carers to order meals provided by *Dolce*, albeit on a restricted menu.

6.8 Attendance

When Bliss reopens to Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, all pupils in these year groups are encouraged to return. This booklet – along with the availability of our on-going risk assessment – can be used to help families see that all the protection and control measures asked of the school have been considered and implemented.

NB. Parents/carers of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 should be aware that if they decide not to send their child back to school, they will still need to inform the office on a daily basis, as per DfE guidelines. Families will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.

6.9 Home learning

School staff understand that some pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 may not return immediately, possibly because they are shielding themselves or because they are living with someone else who is shielding, or perhaps because parents/carers do not yet feel confident about allowing their child to return to school.

Therefore, although eligible children are encouraged to return where possible, home learning support will still be available for these year groups on the class pages of the school website. This will not be emailed home every Monday as it has been but it will be uploaded at the beginning of each week³. Similarly, as Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 are due to return to school, new home learning books will not be delivered to children in these year groups over the May half term holiday. However, should parents/carers in these year groups require another book, it can be requested by emailing office@bliss.northants.sch.uk. These will not be delivered but will be available for collection from outside the school building at a date/time that is mutually convenient and does not conflict with use of the front playground for break and lunch times.

6.10 Parents'/carers' responsibilities

We all have a role to play in making the phased re-opening of schools go smoothly. School staff request the support and understanding of parents/carers in order to successfully manage what the Government has asked:

- Monitor your child's health – and the health of the whole household – and only send your child to school if they are well.
- Look out for symptoms of the coronavirus in all members of your household (e.g. a new, continuous cough or a high temperature of above 37.8 degrees).
- Isolate the whole household for 14 days if anyone in the family home develops coronavirus symptoms and follow the government [guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#), and access testing when available.⁴
- Collect your child from school as soon as possible if you are informed they are unwell.
- Ensure your child is dropped off and collected punctually – according to their new start and finish times – at the beginning and end of the day.
- Follow the Government's lockdown measures strictly so that the indirect risk to other pupils and their families – and school staff and their families – is not increased.
- Reinforce the importance of good hand and respiratory hygiene at home and in advance of the school day.
- Help your child recognise a safe social distance (e.g. two metres or – in the case of younger children – '3 or 4 big steps away').
- Help your child understand the changes to their class and curriculum, e.g. not being in a room with all of their classmates; not being able to socialise with older/younger friends/siblings at break/lunch times; and the cancellation of events they might usually do at school or have been looking forward to.
- Report any absences as normal, engaging with school staff regarding the reasons for non-attendance.
- Seek advance permission before entering the premises.

6.11 Pupils' responsibilities

We all have a role to play in making the phased re-opening of schools go smoothly. School staff request the support and understanding of pupils in order to successfully manage what the Government has asked. We ask pupils to ...

- Tell an adult if they feel poorly.
- To get up and ready for school when they are asked – school start times are earlier for a while!
- Wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap and water thoroughly when they are asked to.
- Use a tissue for coughs and sneezes and make sure they put their tissue in a lidded bin.
- Stay a safe social distance away from their friends (e.g. two metres or '3 or 4 big steps away').
- Follow the new rules in their classroom.
- Be open-minded and positive about coming back to school – they will get to see lots of their friends!

Please share the letter to pupils at the end of this booklet (section 15 on page 9) with your child if you feel it would be useful.

³ Weekly videos for Class R, Class 1 and Class 6 will not be published once we re-open to these classes.

⁴ **NB.** Please be aware that should any person in your child's group develop coronavirus symptoms, all parents/carers of children in that group will be informed immediately and all members of that group (and their families) will have to isolate for 14 days, following the government [guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#). If after testing, coronavirus is not present, the whole group will be allowed back to school and household isolation can end.

7. Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5

Although the Government has expressed its ambition for all primary aged children to return to education before the summer holidays if feasible, there is no date for children in Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 to return to school yet.

At present, children in Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 will carry on learning at home. Packs will continue to be emailed home every Monday and posted on the class pages of the school website, alongside weekly videos from the class teachers. In addition, new home learning books will be delivered for children in these year groups during the May half-term break.

All the teachers and teaching assistants from Classes 2/3/4/5 will be temporarily re-deployed once the school is re-opened to children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. After school, teachers from Classes 2/3/4/5 will be busy preparing home learning packs so – whilst they are still available to email – parents/carers are asked to be mindful of the high workload all Bliss staff will be subject to in Term 6.

8. Vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers in Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5

Childcare for vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers is still available. However, there are changes to this provision compared to how it has been over the past two months.

Vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers in Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 will continue to be able to access daily childcare provision at the school from 9:00 am to 3:15 pm. Any eligible families who have not done so yet, should contact the school office to book their child onto the register.⁵

From 1st June, vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers in Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 need to arrive and depart via the 'welcome area' as explained in section 6.2.

Unlike the last two months, this group will be expected to wear school uniform once the phased reopening begins on 1st June 2020. In addition to the kit listed in section 6.6, vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers from Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 will need to bring their home learning book to school with them each day they are booked in.

Vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers in Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 will be cared for as one group. However, if numbers exceed 15, two separate groups will be established and staggered starts may have to be implemented.

9. Vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6

Once we re-open to Reception, Year 1 or Year 6 on 1st June 2020, vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers in these year groups will be in Class 6A, Class 6B, Class 1A, Class 1B, Class Reception A or Class Reception B. This means they will need to arrive/depart at the stated time for their group and follow the uniform and kit expectations outlined in section 6.6.

If the earlier collection time causes critical workers difficulty, it will be possible to provide childcare (that adheres to the protection and control measures) until 3:15 pm. If this is needed, critical workers should contact office@bliss.northants.sch.uk so these arrangements can be made.

10. Free school meal deliveries for children not in school

Weekly free school meal deliveries for the year groups not returning to school will still be made. At the time of writing, it is not clear if free school meals will still be made available for children who do not return to school because parents choose to keep them at home.

⁵ The school reserves the right to request to see evidence of critical worker status (e.g. a letter from your employer).

11. Remote SEN support

During the school closure, SEN support calls have been made each week – these will continue to take place for children who remain at home.

12. Staff workload

The complexity of the arrangements in this booklet go some way in evidencing the increased workload expected of school staff at this time.

At Bliss, facilitating a phased re-opening to all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 and implementing the protection and control measures needed – whilst still providing childcare for vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers, and providing learning support for the children at home in Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 – places the school under considerable strain. As a result, there will be no capacity for any additional services from 1st June.

13. Further information

Our plans for re-opening are (at the time of writing) fully compliant with the latest DfE requirements – **it is really important that ALL parents/carers read the WHOLE of this booklet very carefully.**

Should further information be required, the DfE materials in section 3 should be referred to first of all, as these documents show how and why the school has planned for re-opening in the way it has. In particular, it is advisable to read <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>.

For transparency, a copy of our risk assessment has been uploaded to our school website – please visit: <https://www.bliss.northants.sch.uk/index.php/parents/phased-re-opening-june-2020>.

14. What next?

- School leaders will continue to respond to updates from the DfE and stakeholders (staff, governors, parents/carers and members of the local community) to adapt our plans and refine our risk assessment to ensure we are ready for the phased re-opening from 1st June.
- School leaders will keep parents up-to-date with any new developments, including the Government's final decision regarding whether or not the phased re-opening will go ahead on the proposed return date of 1st June.
- If the Government decide not to go ahead with the planned re-opening of schools on 1st June, we will share our contingency plans.
- School staff will continue to prepare the school site to enable social distancing in classrooms, communal areas and on the playground.
- Parents/carers of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 **do not** need to let us know yet whether their child will be returning to school from 1st June. Our plan means that all children in these year groups have a place in one of the groups. Once we re-open, absence from school will need to be reported on the day of the absence in the usual way – see section 6.8.

15. Letter to pupils



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Monday 18th May 2020

Dear children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6,

As you might know, schools will be open again shortly!

Whilst I am sure you have had a lovely time learning at home with your family, it will soon be time for you to come back to Bliss ... and we can't wait to see you back in the classroom!

When you come back, it will be a little different, a bit like how it's different for mums and dads when they visit the supermarket these days. Everyone has to do things a little differently right now to make sure they don't get poorly.

So, when you come back, we'll still be asking you to wash your hands lots and lots and lots ... but you were used to doing that before our school closed!

There will be a few other things we'll be asking you to do to keep you safe too. Staying 3 or 4 big steps away from your friends is important at the moment. This doesn't mean you can't play with them, you've just got to do it at a distance – but that's OK, at least you get to see them again regularly!

To keep everyone separated, we'll also be working in slightly smaller groups rather than our big classes. This means you'll get lots of space to yourself – don't worry, though, you'll still be in a classroom with your teacher or teaching assistant.

I know it won't be quite the same when you come back, but the staff at Bliss can't wait to see you again – we've missed those blue uniforms and those smiling faces!

When you come back, we'll be doing our best to make everything feel as normal as possible and we'll be doing everything we can to help you get back on-track with your learning. We'll also be trying to have lots of fun too!

We can't wait to see you!

Mr S. Carter

Mr. S. Carter
(Headteacher)



Head Teacher: Mr S. Carter
Bursar: Ms L. Adey