



20th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones safe and well. Under these circumstances, I make no apology for the length of this letter. It is vital that you are equipped with as much information as possible in order for you to make an informed choice as to whether your child attends school. In this letter, I will do my best to provide you with as much information as I can on our plans to welcome more pupils into school from the 1st June (unless Government guidance suggests otherwise).

Whilst in school, safety and wellbeing will be our primary concern. Our school environment will be adapted, as will our timetable, to minimise cross contamination. 'Home Groups' will be looked after by consistent adults, this will not necessarily be their regular class teacher or LSAs but we have tried to ensure there is someone familiar in each group. 'Home Groups' will remain together for learning times, playtimes and lunchtime. Adults will encourage social distancing, but we need to be realistic about our expectations here.

Please know that we continue to take our responsibilities extremely seriously. We know that your children are your most precious possessions and although I cannot promise that everything will be fine, I can promise that I will do everything I possibly can to ensure it is. The school has undertaken a comprehensive risk assessment (totalling 35 pages) and this risk assessment has driven our decisions. Below is a condensed version of the information I think you will require to make an informed decision as to whether you choose for your child to return to school.

Overview

- Year 1 and Year 6 will be open from Monday 1st June and Preschool and Reception will open from Tuesday 2nd June. This will give us a little extra time to ensure the logistics work as we have planned. Your child will attend from Monday to Thursday each week. The school will be closed to Preschool, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 on Friday each week as this will be a PPA (planning, preparation and assessment)/extra deep clean day where home learning plans are produced ready for the next week, feedback and contact with home learners will be undertaken.
- We will continue to offer care, Monday - Friday, for invited vulnerable pupils and children of Key workers. If your child currently attends this provision they have the option of continuing in this group or can transfer to their corresponding Year group provision. A member of the Senior Leadership Team will have spoken to you about this. This provision will continue to run from Lake View Hall. Drop off and pick up will be at the same place (side entrance of Lake View Hall) but you will no longer be able to exit via the Hilton Road entrance, you will need to walk through the playground and exit via the side gate nearest the lake.
- There will be no Breakfast Club or Willows or any after school clubs, e.g. sports.

Uniform/Equipment

- Children in the main should wear school uniform (preschool uniform policy remains the same) and this will need to be washed after each day at school, following government guidance.
- Children MUST wear trainers rather than school shoes to enable them to carry out physical activities and no child should wear a tie. Children should bring only a named, clean, packed lunch, snack of fruit or vegetable and a named, clean water bottle. Preschool children may bring nappies if needed. Children should not bring their school book bag, disposable bags only please, and only if absolutely necessary. No PE bag needs to be in school. Year 6, if walking to school alone, can bring a phone which will be wiped and placed in a plastic wallet in the classroom.





Drop off and Pick up

- Parents are encouraged to cycle or walk to school rather than using public transport.
- Staff will not use any physical persuasion techniques to coax children into school. If children are very distressed about coming into school, we will be asking parents to take them home and try again the following day.
- It is important that whilst on site you adhere to social distancing and follow our one-way route. There will be a one-way system in and out of the school grounds to minimise contact between parents. ALL parents (other than preschool) should enter through the main school gate on Hilton Road, whether it be to pick up or drop off. There will be a hand washing station at each drop off area which children and adults should use. Please walk around and drop your child off at the allocated drop off and pick up point at the relevant time. To minimise the chance of gathering at gates we ask that you come no earlier than this time, that you drop the children off at the allocated doors, waiting at the allocated lines on the floor, 2 metres apart from each other. Only 1 parent is able to drop a child to school. No parent will be allowed to enter the classrooms to avoid parents crossing each other on the way out, and conversations with teachers at the end of the day will not be able to occur – all communication will be through Class Dojo or the office email address please.
 - Preschool - drop your child off to the preschool gate between 8:30 and 8:50, no earlier. Please pick your child up from the preschool gate between 2:20pm and 2:40pm.
 - Reception – drop your child off at the green reception gate (which leads to the reception outside area) between 8:30 and 8:50, no earlier. For pick up, please enter via Hilton Road entrance again, go to the same green gate between 2:20pm and 2:40pm and exit with your child via the side gate.
 - Year 1 - drop your child off at the Year 2 doors in the KS1 playground between 8:50 and 9:10, no earlier. For pick up, please enter via Hilton Road entrance again, go to the same Year 2 Bay between 2:40pm and 3:00pm and exit with your child via the side gate.
 - Year 6 – drop your child off at the Year 6 doors in the KS2 playground between 9:10 and 9:30, no earlier. For pick up, please enter via Hilton Road entrance again, go to the same Year 6 doors between 3:00pm and 3:20pm and exit with your child via the side gate. Some of you will need to drop off/pick up your child at the Year 3 and Year 5 doors in the KS2 playground instead of Year 6. A member of staff will be in touch to discuss this with you by the end of the week.

Home Groups

- There will be a maximum of 15 children in a 'Home Group' at one time, however it is likely the number will be less than this. We will arrange these groups based on friendships and familiarity of adult. Twins will be together. There will be no negotiation over the 'Home Group' a child belongs to – following government guidance, once a group is allocated, it stays the same without transfers in or out. These children will not mix with any other children throughout the day.

School Environment

- The school environment has been changed to allow social distancing. The following classrooms will be used:
 - Preschool will use the Preschool building and their Preschool garden.
 - Reception will use the two Reception classrooms (England and Scotland) and a Year 1 classroom (Northern Ireland) and the corresponding outside areas.
 - Year 1 will use the two Year 2 classrooms (Italy and Iceland) and a Year 3 classroom (Kenya).
 - Year 6 will use the two Year 6 classrooms and a Year 5 classroom (USA).
- All furniture will be appropriate to the age group.
- A one-way system around the school is in place to minimise contact in corridors.
- Doors around the school will be kept open to avoid the need to touch surfaces or to move around (which will rarely be needed) and windows will be open to allow for ventilation.





Winter Gardens Academy

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Tel: 01268 699305

Web: www.wintergardensacademy.org

Headteacher: Catherine Stalham

- There will be no educational visits until further notice. Access to school will only be permitted if absolutely necessary. Parents should communicate with school via email or telephone admin@wintergardensacademy.org or 01268 699305.

Lunches

- We are able to supply a cold packed lunch for your child and are happy for children to bring their own (healthy lunch policy stands). No hot meals will be available. Our kitchen staff will be adhering to social distancing guidance and will ensure effective hygiene procedures. Lunches will be delivered to classes and children will eat in the classroom. They will have a time-tabled outside play, in their own zoned area.

Staffing

- Staffing capacity is an issue. Where we can, we have ensured that children are led by adults that work in their year group. However, where this is not possible, other staff from different year groups may lead groups.
- Senior Leaders and a Wellbeing Manager will be on site to help with any behavioural/wellbeing/safeguarding concerns. The wellbeing of children will be prioritised over the curriculum as our aim is to make the children comfortable and to ease any anxiety.

Curriculum

- Learning throughout the day will mirror activities suggested for home learning.
- At this time, it is vital that our curriculum represents the needs of the children and so there will be a strong focus on wellbeing.
- All children will have regular timetabled slots to learn or play outside with equipment.
- If a year group is transitioning in or out of school this will be a focus of the learning. Although, preschool to school, and secondary transition arrangements have not been finalised, we will attempt to mirror this transition work using Class Dojo, for children that do not attend school.
- Children will have access to play and learning equipment that can easily be cleaned. Children will continue to have access to books.

Health and Safety

- Children with health conditions such as asthma should seek medical advice before returning to school. For children who fall into the extremely vulnerable category, we suggest they do not attend as we cannot guarantee social distancing. Children who live with someone who is vulnerable or extremely vulnerable may attend school, but again, we ask you to seriously consider the risk.
- Incorporated into our daily timetable will be regular hand washing. Children will wash/sanitise their hands every time they enter the classroom. We will continue to teach children about effective hand washing and about the importance of good hygiene. Children will wash/sanitise their hands before eating and after coughing and sneezing and after using the bathroom.
- The school has undergone a thorough deep clean. From 1st June daily cleaning hours have been increased. Teaching and midday staff will also be equipped with cleaning material and will clean surfaces regularly throughout the day. The school will undergo a thorough clean in readiness for any new group of children attending. Please note, we will be using a range of cleaning equipment, some of which may affect allergies. Please email the office if child has any allergies we are unaware of, especially hand wash or sanitiser.
- Only certain resources will be used, ones which can be cleaned easily, others will be removed or not used.
- PPE is recommended by the Government only for staff dealing with pupils who show symptoms, or who need "intimate care", for first aid, as well as for cleaning. If appropriate PPE is not delivered on time

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(currently this does not appear to be an issue), the extended provision will not open. Please warn your children that at times staff will wear PPE so they are prepared for this.

- Pupils will be allocated a single plastic wallet of equipment e.g. work book, pencil, age appropriate resources etc. This is kept at school, named, only to be used by one pupil. This is to avoid spread through contact with stationery. All feedback to pupils will be verbal.
- Should your child or a household member develop COVID-19 (persistent cough, temperature, and/or loss of smell or taste) please inform the school immediately and self-isolate for 14 days in accordance with government guidance. If a child or adult tests positive for COVID-19, the whole group – children and adults – in the 'home group' will need to self-isolate for 14 days regardless of any symptom.
- As children and staff maybe in unfamiliar classrooms, we have amended and shared our evacuation procedures. This will be shared with children on their first day and reminders of procedures will be regular.
- Please be aware that the Government have directed schools to prioritise an offer of place to children in preschool, then reception, then year 1 and then followed by Year 6. Therefore, if staffing becomes untenable, the Year 6 provision may be the first to close to prioritise the other year groups.

Attendance

- Attendance is not compulsory and no penalty notices will be issued for non-attendance.
- For those that decide to access the provision, our normal protocol for non-attendance applies - if for a particular reason, your child cannot attend school one day, please communicate with the school office in the usual way. If we do not hear from you then we will attempt to contact you via telephone. If we cannot contact you, in line with our safeguarding policy, we may carry out a home visit to ensure you and your child are safe.
- A child may have their offer of a place removed if the child is unable to social distance, after a period of transition and strategies have been put in place to support the child.

This plan is totally dependent on staff numbers remaining healthy and our continuous monitoring of the Risk Assessment. Plans will be adapted if required, I will continue to keep you updated of any changes.

I hope the above information has given you some insight into how the school will operate and the safety measures we have taken to prepare for the extended opening. If you have answered 'yes' to the survey, details including your child's teacher and classroom will be communicated to you by the end of the week. If you have answered that your child 'maybe' returning on 1st June (on our parent survey) I ask that you please email admin@wintergardensacademy.org if you have now made your decision, whether that be yes or no. If not, you may receive a phone call towards the end of the week to discuss this with you. In the meantime, please send any questions to admin@wintergardensacademy.org. For those children who join us at school, we will welcome them back with care, sensitivity and kindness.

Finally, another thank you. Thank you for your patience, engagement with the school. Your continued support has made a very difficult job so much easier. We hope that you will see from our plans that we value and prioritise the safety and health of our school community and are working through the challenges of returning to school with the wellbeing of everyone guiding what we do.

Take care of yourselves.

Catherine Stalham
Headteacher

