

From: Andrew Fleck BSc, MA
Principal



SEDBERGH SCHOOL

FOUNDED 1525

13 May 2020

Dear Parents

The Prime Minister's message on Sunday evening and the documentation that followed on Monday provides us with direction in the next phase of the recovery from the current lockdown. We all wish to return to full School operation as swiftly as possible but recognise this will not happen before September and that much work is required between now and then to ensure the School operates effectively and as safely as possible. This communication is about limited re-opening within Casterton, Sedbergh Prep School.

The Government has indicated that pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 6 may be allowed to return to School in June. We will also continue to supervise the children of key workers during the course of the school day and would invite parents falling into that category to contact Jane Hartley (jah@sedberghprep.org) if we can help in any way.

Accordingly, the Prep School has started to prepare for re-opening. At the forefront of this work is the need to protect children and diminish the risk of infection. We are drawing on advice received from the successful management of the pandemic in New Zealand, SE Asia and guidance from the Department of Education and our School Doctor. We have specific measures planned, depending on pupil numbers, and would welcome further suggestions from parents through the survey at the end of this letter.

The Government has acknowledged that maintaining a distance of two metres from their friends is difficult for younger children. Instead, the means to reduce the likelihood of contagion comes through consistent groupings, high standards of hand hygiene and the use of tissues, heightened cleaning regimes and isolation from those displaying symptoms of Covid-19. Pupils will be supervised as they wash their hands every hour, in between lessons and before meals. Ample supplies of tissues will be provided to all children and these bins emptied at the end of every day.

Further precautions include limiting class sizes to no more than 15, seating children as far from each other as the numbers and space allow in both the classroom and dining hall, spaced queuing, eliminating close contact in the school corridor, and so on. All indoor spaces will be ventilated by open windows or doors. At break times, children will be encouraged to play with toys such as skipping ropes, that encourage individual play within a group setting. Shared contact of keyboards, desks, chairs and equipment will all be ruled out through our careful arrangements for the School day.

.../cont'd

Sedbergh School
Sedbergh
Cumbria
LA10 5HG

Tel: 015396 20535
Email: principal@sedberghschool.org

The various Year groups and classes will be structured in such a way that they will have contact only with each other and their teachers, but not other children. These groups will remain intact through lessons, break times, lunchtimes and afternoon activities. We can provide more detail on the groups and their staffing arrangements once we know these numbers.

Timings of the School day will be adjusted to ensure that different groups do not interact with each other either at any point of the day, including drop off, lunchtime and pick up.

Pupils in Year 6 will be dropped off from 8.00am to 8.30am, directly from cars as they progress around the one-way system. They will go directly to their classroom and will not be accompanied into School by parents. These children will then be collected from the Sports Pavilion at 3.30pm. Reception and Year 1 will be dropped off and picked up in the car park outside the Sports Hall between 8.30 – 9.00am in the morning and 3.00 – 3.15pm in the afternoon. Again, they will be welcomed directly into the Sports Hall without a parent bringing them in.

The use of minibuses to transport pupils to School has been discouraged and so we do not plan to run our usual bus services. Please contact Jane Hartley (jah@sedberghprep.org) if this causes you any difficulty.

Any pupil displaying symptoms consistent with Covid-19 must not attend School. If symptoms emerge during the School day, a pupil would be moved sympathetically, but swiftly, to a room in Thornfield House until their parents were able to pick them up. Once home, the child would have to self-isolate for 7 days and their household for 14 days. We are told by the Government that the unwell pupil will have access to a test and a negative result would, of course, end their self-isolation and that of their household. Should the test prove positive, then all members of their School group or class would also have to self-isolate for 14 days, although the family members of their class would not.

There are seven Weekly or Full Boarders amongst Year 6 and these safety measures can be extended into Beale and Cressbrook. These children would be grouped as a class during the day and taught separately from Day pupils. The views of these parents are sought in the survey link below.

Alongside reducing the risk of transmission, we have also developed our teaching plans. In the Prep School, all children in these Year groups will continue to be taught whether they return to School or remain at home. I am sure you will appreciate that the precise nature of this arrangement depends very much on the number of pupils that return to School. It is likely that lessons for those children on site will be a blend of face-to-face lessons from their teacher and supervision by another member of staff whilst learning from their regular teacher online. We are proud of what we have achieved in our remote learning and will ensure that our pupils continue to receive the best possible education whether they are able to return to School or not.

.../cont'd

Children in Reception and Year 1 would be supplied with a picnic lunch in order to maintain social distancing whilst they eat, hopefully enjoying their meal outside if the weather is fine. Children in Year 6 will be able to eat in the dining hall at staggered sittings.

After their final lesson, pupils will enjoy some activity in the afternoon with a rotation of athletics, walking and tennis. It is likely that guidelines on particular sports such as swimming or cricket will follow in the coming weeks.

The afternoon activity will run from 2.00pm until 3.30pm; given the adapted timetable already in place, it is sensible to finish the School day at this point. Indeed, parents would be welcome to collect their child at 12.00pm, before lunch, if they preferred. We will move the final lesson to the end of the day in order to allow for staggered lunches and travel home if this is what individuals prefer.

In order to develop our plans we need to understand the intentions of all parents of children in Reception or Years 1 and 6 to gain insight into the number of children who will return to School so that we can provide the appropriate number of teachers, classrooms and other facilities.

If you have a child in Reception or Years 1 or 6 please open the survey [here](#) and submit your response by Friday 15 May.

The Government has made clear its ambition to return all children of primary age back to School within a month of the summer holidays. This plan is entirely dependent on the national alert level and we will develop our plans and communicate these to you as the picture emerges.

Our attention is increasingly turning to our plans for the Michaelmas Term and how to ensure that social distancing measures are maximised and hygiene promoted so that pupils can return to their School with confidence. As these plans evolve, I will write again to seek your thoughts and inform you about these arrangements.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely



Andrew Fleck
Principal



Will Newman
Headmaster (CSPS)