

# Westacre Infant School



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Dear Parents and Carers,

This is a formal proposal for the reopening of Westacre Infant School from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.

You will be aware that the government recently issued guidance to support schools in the possible reopening of schools from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June. The government will confirm by Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May whether schools can begin to open from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June. As an infant school, we have been identified as needing to make safe plans for the return of pupils in Nursery, Reception and Year 1. We are the largest Infant School in the City and our planning and decisions have had to be different to every other school in many ways due to the amount of pupils we have on roll and the limited amount of sizable classrooms we have. We are in the process of undertaking a thorough risk assessment that will be available for you to view over the half term holiday. We have had to recently conduct a capacity exercise that identifies the amount of pupils and adults we can have in all of our classrooms whilst adhering to social distancing. The exercise confirmed that some of our classrooms only have the sufficient space to accommodate 7 children safely.

To ensure that we are ready and prepared the Local Authority have suggested that all Primary Schools have a preparation day on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June. On Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June we will still be open for the Critical Worker Children. They have also recommended that we limit the provision to only Critical Worker Children for 1 day a week. Staff at Westacres will use Wednesdays to plan for the following week and we can use this day to clean specific areas of the school. At the end of every day, each classroom and the resources that have been used will be cleaned in readiness for the following day.

In a primary school it is not possible to ask children and adults to adhere to social distancing for every minute of the day. However, I do feel we can limit the amount of contact we have with other people and groups. I will only invite your children back to school if they can work with some of their friends and adults that they are familiar with. I will not put children of a Nursery and Reception age in a strange room with an adult that they are not familiar with. I will not allocate your children a spot or a chair and table that they have to remain at for the whole of a school day. I believe this would be distressing for your youngest children and we would see no benefit in them returning to school.

We hope by that taking a sensible, small and measured step, we can give the children in the identified year groups some access to school. We will be following guidance to ensure your children remain with the same group/bubble of children and adults whilst they are at school. We will talk to the children about being in their bubbles. They will have access to resources and outside but this will be limited in the first instance.

We will implement measures within the classrooms that means they will not be mixing as frequently as they usually do. We do believe it will be important for your children to have conversations with other children and adults. We are in the process of considering a recovery curriculum that will enable us to support your

children without placing too much emphasis on catching up quickly. My priority in all of this is the well-being of your children. Staff will be using the home learning materials and planning creative activities that your children will enjoy.

In the first instance, we are in a position to offer every child in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 to come to school one day a week. Doing it, this way means that everybody gets something and only small numbers of children are safely in the school at any given time. I am fully aware that some of you would like your children to attend more days and there may be some of you that do not want your children to attend at all. We must take a sensible, staggered approach to schooling and I believe strongly that expecting your children to do too much too soon with limited resources will be stressful for your children and possibly jeopardise the safety of everyone.

You can only attend the days that you will be offered via text today. The text you get will tell you specifically the day of the week you can attend. If you do not receive a text then you will need to email the school directly. We would also like the parents that will be sending their children in to confirm this using the school email address. Email us confirming Yes and the name of your child or children attending please. You do not need to email us to tell us you are not sending your children into school. Each class of 30 has had to be divided into 4 groups, therefore the day that you will be offered is not negotiable and the staff have already placed your children into their groups. This may mean that you have siblings in on a different day. With the limited capacity we have and the amount of siblings we have in school it is not possible to accommodate the needs of every family in the first instance. We will be providing meals for the children and you may continue with packed lunches if that is what your children are used to. The children will go out to play but again they will remain within their group/bubble. Breakfast and Teatime Clubs will continue from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June for the children of Critical Workers.

Our initial phase of the return means that children will need to arrive at school at staggered times.

Nursery a.m. arrive at 8:45 and depart at 11:15

Nursery p.m. to arrive at 12:30 and depart at 3:00

Reception arrive at 9:00 and depart at 3:15

Year 1 arrive at 9:20 and depart at 3:30

All teachers in Nursery and Reception will have their usual teachers. Mrs Taylor and Mrs Curtis will teach Mrs Darcy's children in Miss Phillips' Classroom. The teachers remain the same in the other two Year 1 classes. Mrs Darcy's and Mrs Frost's children will be taught in a Year 2 classroom because the classrooms are too small for a bubble of children. Miss Phillips, Mrs Maguire and Mrs Pearson will support the Critical Worker children. The Critical Worker children will not be going into their usual classrooms because the advice is to limit the amount of mixing with other groups and adults.

A one-way system is to be introduced around the school and this will enable you as visitors to adhere to social distancing guidelines. The children of Critical workers may still enter school using the front entrance as we have been doing. Adults visiting the site must ensure they adhere to social distancing guidance whilst on the school premises. No visiting adults are allowed to use the school car park. The route will not have wheelchair access and the use of pushchairs may prove difficult. The teachers will not be available for

you to talk to at the beginning and the end of the day. Parents will be advised not to enter the school site unless they are collecting children. The children will not be required to wear their school uniform and it is essential that the children do not bring any additional items into school. The children will only need a coat and their packed lunches. Any queries must be via telephone or email if possible.

You cannot send your children to school if they are showing any signs of illness. If your children are sent home for other illnesses, we are insisting that you keep them at home for at least 7 days. The reason for this is that some children display different symptoms and we will not take the risk.

If your child has any underlying health issues or has been asked to shield then you do not send your children to school.

If your child develops a new cough, a continuous cough or has a high temperature they will be sent home and they must self-isolate for 7 days. The guidance says fellow household members should then self-isolate for 14 days.

If a child or member of staff tests positive, the rest of that group and other children that have been in contact with the member of staff will be sent home and must self-isolate for 14 days.

I am aware that this is overwhelming and you have a difficult decision to make but I can ensure you that we have done all we can to limit the risk. You are under no obligation to send your children to school but we are aware that some families may feel it is necessary for your children to have access to some education in school.

We will continue to provide food hampers for families that are entitled to Free School Meals and not attending schools. We will also continue to provide weekly home learning tasks. Full time provision will still be available for the Children of Critical Workers and they do not need to wear their uniforms.

The hope for all of us at Westacres is that we get the chance to teach and say our goodbyes to the Year 2 children. Mrs Webster Smith and I will be meeting after half term to look at what we can do to support your transition to Uplands. Uplands have a fantastic website and Facebook page that you can all access. As soon as we have a plan for Year 2 we will let you know. I promise you Year 2 that part of that plan will be a party at Westacre as soon as safely possible.

I am aware that you may have your own view on the proposal and you may have done things differently but this is the safest plan we have that adheres to national and local guidance. The staff have agreed to this plan and we have throughout the planning process considered the safety of everyone involved. The most important thing is to keep your children smiling and I believe that with your support we can make this work.

I have a duty of care for my own family, my colleagues, you and your amazing children. I will not do anything that I feel puts your children at significant risk and I completely respect any decision that you make as a family. We will get this right but it will take time. We will review our plan daily and inform you immediately of any significant changes.

May I take this opportunity to personally thank all of the staff for their bravery, dedication and support during this difficult time. The cleaners, the site manager, the catering staff, the administrative staff and the

teaching staff have been amazing and have done everything they can to support your children in school and at home. Well done to the children for being brave in school whilst your family do their important jobs and well done to all the children that have been brave and sensible at home for such a long time. Thank you parents for being so understanding and patient with this proposal. If you have, any queries email the school and we will respond as soon as we possibly can.

Stay safe and see you all soon.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aid Edmunds', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Mr Aidan Edmunds

Headteacher