



# Dalmain Primary School

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*Headteacher*  
Ms Erika Eisele  
*Deputy Headteacher*  
Mrs Sarah Rose

8 June 2020

Dear Reception Parents and Carers

## **Wider Opening: proposed date Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June pending final confirmation**

Thank you for your patience while we have been formulating and risk assessing our plans for welcoming the Reception children back to school. There is no doubt how much we all want to be back but we can only do this through a safe and controlled strategy for wider opening, responding carefully to the risks associated with this.

With safety at the forefront of our decisions, we have formulated the below plans based on the latest Government guidance, the individual challenges of our school building, classroom sizes, access points and our staffing capacity. As promised, we will be completely transparent about what we can offer safely at school and you will need to consider carefully whether or not what we can provide at this stage is beneficial for your child.

*Please note that final confirmation of Reception wider opening will be circulated by the end of Tuesday 16th June at the earliest. Wider opening will NOT start for Reception any sooner than Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June. The school will only be open for vulnerable children or those of key workers between now and then.*

## **Safety**

The safety of our children, families and staff is paramount and we understand that, while we can mitigate some of the risks associated with wider opening, we will not be able to remove them altogether. As detailed in my letter of Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May, we have put in place a number of measures to ensure that the school site and our new procedures enable us to keep children and staff as safe as possible so that we now have:

- Smaller class sizes organised for when we implement wider opening
- Staggered drop off and pick up points
- Traffic light system for moving through corridors
- Specific timetable slots for movement around school eg to the toilet visits, playtimes etc
- PPE for staff where needed
- Additional hand washing facilities and signage
- Hand sanitiser dispensers in every classroom and at key points around school
- Additional cleaning materials available in classrooms
- Enclosed hygiene bins with lids
- Additional cleaning for key areas and touch points
- Additional deep cleaning across the school
- No contact thermometers for testing children before they enter the school



This list of preventative measures may increase in response to our risk assessments but these will be our minimum standards for wider opening during Term 6.

We have also undertaken a thorough risk assessment, based on the Lewisham approved Covid-19 model, and we will continue to review the effectiveness of the safety measures in place on a daily basis. This has changed due to the increased uptake in vulnerable key worker places required recently in school, hence why we have not been able to publish our plans for this year group sooner.

Our final plans for Reception wider opening may still change but we will communicate this to you as soon as we possibly can.

## Bubbles

Following the latest guidance, each class will become a “bubble”. This means that children within this bubble will only have contact with each other, their allocated class teacher and one other adult during break time. The Government thinking behind this is to limit contact between groups and to contain the virus if it is caught by one person within the bubble.

If one person within your child’s bubble displays symptoms of Covid-19, the entire bubble will be asked to go home immediately. The person with suspected Covid-19 will need to be tested and, if the test shows a negative result, the whole bubble will be able to come back to school the following day after confirmation of the results. If the test shows a positive Covid-19 result, all children and adults within that bubble will be required to self-isolate for 14 days.

## Maximum 15 children per class

To observe social distancing in school, we will be splitting each class in half with a maximum of 15 children per class. We will confirm which children are in each class closer to the wider opening date.

We have organised classrooms to accommodate social distancing and children will be asked to remain in their seats at all times while in class.

*We will NOT be able to offer either Breakfast Club or Afterschool Club provision at this time. Please contact either Rainbow or Acorn Club for afterschool care.*

Class	Drop Off	Pick Up	Drop off / pick up point	Classroom	Breaktime	Lunchtime*
Ali – A	9:15am	2:45pm	The Pen – please enter via the external Pen gate and wait in The Pen until your class teacher arrives to collect your child.	Nursery	Each class will have break time with their own bubble only. This includes not sharing play equipment with other bubbles.	We can only offer full days safely if all children bring in a packed lunch. Pupils will eat their packed lunches in their classrooms/playground and will not mix with any children outside their bubble during break or lunchtimes.  *Any children who receive Free School Meals will continue to be provided with a meal at school and will not be required to bring in a packed lunch from home.
Ali – B	9:30am	3:00pm				
Obama – A	9:15am	2:45pm		Library		
Obama – B	9:30am	3:00pm				

*Please note, however, that if there is a national increase in Covid-19 cases or an increased uptake of key worker places being required, and continuing with a wider opening strategy becomes too great a risk to the Dalmain community then we will have to reassess and potentially change the date when Reception can safely return to school. I would, of course, write to you as soon as I could to communicate any change in the start date/s.*

## **Pupil, Parent / Carer, and Staff Agreement**

In preparation for wider opening, we have drawn up a Covid-Safe Pupil, Parent / Carer and Staff Agreement. We have a collective responsibility to mitigate as many risks as possible from daily interactions, and it is essential that everyone within our community understands and agrees to these practices, for the safety of all when we implement wider opening.

You can read the Covid Safe Agreement here: <http://www.dalmain.lewisham.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Covid-Safe-Agreement-Pupils-Parents-Staff.pdf>

I ask that parents and carers respond to this letter to confirm your agreement before your child returns to school. ***This confirmation will be a pre-requisite of children being able to start back at school.*** Our utmost priority is health and safety, and we hope that this additional measure will further ensure that the same covid safe behaviours are adhered to by all for the wellbeing of all. If you need any assistance in confirming your acceptance, please let us know and we will make arrangements with you individually to support this.

## **Curriculum**

Our priorities have been and will remain:

1. Safety of children and staff
2. Emotional wellbeing and mental health of children
3. Impact on learning

Upon wider opening, learning life at Dalmain will feel slightly different, not least of all because of the amount of children our children will now see in school. As fundamentally social creatures, children's brains grow in the context of meaningful human to human interaction and we will not be underestimating the impact of the loss of that social interaction. We will be adapting the curriculum to allow for recovery in this area and increasing our provision to focus on the increased need for holistic development. Pupil well-being and mental health will be a huge priority.

Our staff are very good at assessing children's progress and, once we are satisfied that children have settled back into our new routines, then we will begin a more formal approach to academic learning. We know what an important time this is, particularly for our younger children, and we will do everything we can to ensure that they are happy and emotionally settled ready for their transition to the next academic year.

Within the restrictions of social distancing and the size of our classrooms, teachers will not be able to move around the classroom to provide individual feedback but we are working on ways to enable this as best as we can.

Home learning packs will continue to be circulated every week, as with all other year groups, for the children who do not attend school during Term 6.

## **Classroom Layout**

The classroom environment will look and feel different for pupils. Following the latest Government guidelines and safety advice, we have taken steps to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. This includes removing soft furnishings, toys and various resources in addition to organising classrooms so that children have their own space to work in.

We will make the learning space as welcoming as possible but the measures we are obliged to take will have an impact on, for example, how much children can share resources or move around the room. We are acutely aware that this goes against everything that we know about early child development but these measures are in place to increase school safety and we promise to support all children during this challenging time to adjust to these changes.

### **Teachers**

We will be operating within a reduced staffing capacity because a number of our staff fall within vulnerable groups. Therefore, we cannot guarantee that your child will have their usual class teacher but we will endeavour to timetable this if at all possible. We have an incredibly caring and highly skilled staff team so I can assure you that whoever is leading the daily sessions will ensure that your child is safe and happy across their time in school.

### **Resources**

We will provide children with their own resources kit and we will be asking children not to share their resources with each other. Please can we ask that children do not bring any additional items to school eg, pencil cases or school bags, apart from their daily lunch box and water bottle.

### **Attendance**

Parents and carers should be aware that the school can take reasonable steps to mitigate as many risks as possible but that we cannot eliminate all risks of Covid 19 in a school setting, even with the modifications we have made.

As stated above, parents and carers will need to consider if returning to school is in the best interest of their child considering what can be safely offered at school.

Please be aware that there will be no consequences for non-attendance for the remaining weeks of this half term; it is parental choice.

### **And finally...**

We understand that this is a very different approach to schooling from the one that we are all used to and that the next stage may not be easy, but we are doing everything that we can to ensure that our children, staff and community are as safe as possible during wider opening.

If you do have any questions about returning to school and how things will work in this "new normal", then please do email us at [admin@dalmain.lewisham.co.uk](mailto:admin@dalmain.lewisham.co.uk) and we will respond as soon as possible as we continue to prepare for wider opening.

With very best wishes,

**Ms Eisele**  
**Headteacher**