

Returning to school Recovery Action Plan

Working document from April 2020 – September 2020

Returning to schools being fully open after the Covid-19 lockdown is going to be hard. It is very hard to try and predict what it will look like or when or how it will happen. Regardless of whether it is as early as June, or possibly not until September or even later, we have to hope that we will have a proper chance to plan and not 48 hours notice from a press conference. We must be aware that it will be a very different experience for every school and for the different people - children, staff and parents - within the school. We have some experience of returning to school that we can draw on. We experience this in miniature at the end of each summer holiday, but this return will be much more complex. We will need to be honest with ourselves and each other about how difficult this experience will be.

There are going to be a number of key things to consider and include in our plans for the return to school for all.

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Establishing our relationships with children, parents and staff again.

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Considerations	Action	By whom?
<p>Schools have not been shut Despite the news headlines, we know that the majority of schools have not been closed and many school staff have continued to work in schools, including during the school holidays, though not always their own school. Furthermore, all of teachers have continued to work providing education and support from home some whilst home schooling their own children. We must recognise these experiences, particularly where staff have continued working over the Easter holidays too. Staff are going to start tired and this will impact on their ability to lead, manage and respond to change. For teachers of young families and children or family to care for they will have had a very stressful time whilst working their full hours so may need some emotional support.</p>	<p>Ensure staff meetings are an opportunity to focus on wellbeing of staff and discuss any children of concern. Staff meeting will not be used to address CPD for the first half term. Staff are not expected to mark books but feedback only verbally for the first few weeks allowing them to go home after the children have left. Staff are only expected to spend the first few weeks back assessing the children's academic, social and emotional needs through running open activities, talking, playing and enjoying the broad curriculum such as PE, Music, Art/ DT, topic and yoga. This will not need a vast amount of planning for and, again, minimise workload for teachers. All staff must be given time to talk with SLT regarding their own experiences at home and any support we can offer. All staff are reminded of the Care Plan we have in place for them should they want to use it.</p>	HT
<p>Don't pretend that everything is normal For many of us, adults and children, the return to school will be greeted with a huge sigh of relief and we will want to pretend that the world is returning to how it was, but we will all have been changed by the experience of Corona. It will take time for us to adjust to the 'new' normal. We will need to recognise and allow for this by being kind to each other and ourselves.</p>	<p>This will be actioned during Staff meetings and assemblies. All staff and children will be reminded that we will take our time to return to 'normal' and it will be done in a holistic way. If we acknowledge the huge historical event we lived through and report that we can allow ourselves to blend back into normal when all parties show they are ready. This will be reviewed daily by SLT and weekly by all staff. If wellbeing is cared for the children will hit the ground running when they are ready and make up the lost learning relatively quickly as evidenced in other countries.</p>	HT
<p>Re-establishing routines For many the re-establishment of routines will be difficult. This will not just be for school routines; it will also be for those basic daily life routines, such as sleep and getting up. We know that this is difficult and a source of anxiety at the beginning of every term, but this will be on a larger scale. We will need to allow a period of adjustment and be aware of the impact of trying to re-establish</p>	<p>It is important for the transition back to school to involve a routine being put in place swiftly as children prefer routine and it gives them a sense of comfort. However, some families may struggle and it is important for the school to acknowledge this and offer help where needed. Children will be very tired (as will staff) by afternoon and so the timetable will need to account for this and organise for more open activities.</p>	HT Teachers

<p>these routines for staff, parents and children. We will need to re-learn the rhythm of the school.</p>	<p>Children will have been eating at very odd times and may be more hungry – we can provide snacks for morning break in KS2 as we do in KS1 until their eating patterns return to normal.</p>	
<p>Re-establishing expectations We are aware that different people will have had very different experiences during the lockdown. Some will have been in hub, though for them school will have been a very different place. The majority of children will have been at home and each of them will have had their own experience. It will take time to re-establish and re-learn the expectations of school behaviour and learning. We know that much of learning is based on practice and we will all be out of practice with this.</p>	<p>The key here is re-establishing behaviour expectations, how we speak to each other, how we treat each other and our attitude to being in school. The learning will happen when this is all established. Daily talks with the class by the Headteacher to remind them all is well, creating a safe environment, reminding them they are loved and cared for. With this they are reminded of respect for each other, love for each other and what that looks like again, thus re-creating the ethos and culture we had. This will move on to attitude to learning.</p>	<p>Headteacher Staff</p>
<p>Differences in learning Across schools there will be a huge range in what learning children have engaged in while not in school. There will be children who have spent every day, including the holidays, engaged in formal learning activities and completed every piece of work set by the school. Equally, there will be children who have not engaged in any focused learning activity for the entire time they were not in school. Most children will come somewhere in between. We will need to respond to what children have learnt, not what we expected them to have learnt. We will need to understand what children have learnt and what they have forgotten. Even more, those who have been a carer for a sick relative or dealt with grief for someone they couldn't see. This learning and possible trauma is not on the curriculum but will be key to who our children are.</p>	<p>Assessing learning: We will do this informally, to restart children's schooling with formal testing will mitigate any focus on rebuilding relationships and exacerbate the anxieties about restarting formal schooling. It will be more important to value and celebrate what children have learnt. The teachers will spend time allowing the children to 'show and tell' what they have been doing, what they have learned and what their lives have been like over the lockdown. We can then assess them academically as well as socially and emotionally. Key to this is celebration and recognition, will be to remember that much of what children may have learnt will be very different to 'school learning' and certainly not on the curriculum. We will need to take time to find out who has learnt to bake a cake, build a wall, become an expert on the Roman Army or the life of an Amazonian dolphin. (Seesaw reports pdf) Teachers' responses will be key to how children are able to reintegrate into school and the people that they will become.</p>	<p>Teachers Headteacher</p>
<p>Exclusion For many schools there are divisions between access to learning during the lock down for different children. Successful accessing of learning from home depends on many factors. As children become older, they may become more independent in their learning. But for the majority of children, learning will depend on the role of parent as 'teacher'. This depends on parental skills, interest and commitment. It is further impacted by the parents' work commitments, educational and language levels. Further there are issues of space to learn, as well as access to physical and online resources.</p>	<p>Many parents have not had the capability to get their child logged on and accessing the tasks for different reasons. Some children may feel they have missed out. We must acknowledge that this may not have been their fault that they did not manage to carry out much 'learning'. Whilst we will celebrate the 'learning' online we will also look at what children are doing to entertain themselves, how they have shown resilience, patience and kindness at home so as not to discriminate against the children who have not been able to do much work online.</p>	<p>Teachers</p>

<p>Difference between those who have been to hub and those who have not</p> <p>There will be significant differences for children who have and have not been on the school site during the lockdown. It would be wrong to assume that those who have been in school are OK. We need to remember that these are our most vulnerable families. As we have had 10 children attend hub we will need to support their transition. They will be very comfortable with no social distancing, attending school and not worried about ‘catching’ something more than the children who have stayed home for months constantly being reminded they cannot go outside. The children will have had very different messages and experiences, but not necessarily academically different.</p>	<p>We will ensure we use their experience to highlight to children that it is safe in school as long as we wash our hands, keep some distance and use a tissue to sneeze or cough. The hub children will be proof that it can be done and we can use them which will be lovely for them as they may feel hard done by for having to go to school. This will allow us to celebrate their achievements with going to school and keeping safe.</p> <p>They will have made new friends who they now have to part from. Speak with the children and see if they want to keep contact – penpal etc.</p> <p>They can model to the other children how they kept safe and still managed to have a great time playing and learning.</p>	<p>Teachers</p>
<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Domestic Abuse</p> <p>We will need to be really vigilant about children who have experienced abuse during the lockdown. There has been a significant rise in domestic abuse during the lockdown. Many children will have suffered significant harm during this time. We need to be aware of this as a possibility for all our children, not just the ones we had identified as vulnerable.</p> <p>Online abuse</p> <p>In addition, we need to be aware of the threats and possible abuse that children may have experienced online during this time. There are increased risks from adults and the exposure to harmful images and threats.</p> <p>Online bullying</p> <p>Further, as the lock down has forced more and more of children’s social lives to move online, we need to be aware of the increased risk of online peer on peer abuse.</p>	<p>The first half term will be dedicated to creating a safe environment for all children and allow them many regular opportunities to talk about their experiences.</p> <p>We will need to ensure that children have safe spaces to talk about their experiences during the lockdown. We will need to ensure that all children have access to trusted adults who will listen to them and are ready and trained to respond to them effectively. This will be 1:1, small group sessions and the whole class , using the Confident Me materials in KS2</p> <p>All staff to receive a safeguarding briefing on how to respond to disclosures on return to school.</p> <p>We need to remember that it may take a long time for children to reveal any abuse. They may communicate it through behaviour and other indicators, rather than through disclosure. All staff need to be aware of this and able to respond appropriately and immediately. We are not to assume poor behaviour is due to being back in school but could be the child trying to communicate a frustration.</p>	<p>All staff DSL DDSL</p>
<p>Bereavement</p> <p>It is essential that we are clear with children who has died and who has not returned to our setting for some other reason- house moves, job changes, parents deciding to continue with home education, etc. This will need to be discussed, or children and social media will build up rumours and stories that will be neither helpful or healthy.</p>	<p>As a school family we are transparent about any changes that have occurred. This can be within class setting where necessary or during Key Stage assembly. We have had some children move to other schools over the period and we want to share with the children how we wish them luck and can send a card to the child if they wish, allowing them to say goodbye.</p>	<p>Staff SEMH SENDCo</p>

<p>Even for those who have not experienced a death in their family or community, any illness will become a greater source of anxiety as the link between illness and death will have been reinforced in a way that was not common experience in twenty first century Britain. This will lead to more anxiety and may make many children (and adults) more risk adverse.</p>	<p>The school will take time to look at how many people recovered from the illness due to the skills and care of the NHS, the money that was raised to support them, the encouragement given by the nation (clapping) and find a way to let them know how thankful we are. The children can come up with a way to share the message to NHS but also the great success of this number to the community and be a voice of celebration.</p> <p>Staff will refer to the Ed Psych LCC where a child has experienced bereavement or have fear and SEMH teacher (Bev) will support them too.</p>	
<p>Sensory needs Many children will be looking forward to the return to school but will find being around people difficult, frightening and overwhelming, particularly if we move rapidly from social distancing to a return to school. We will need to be aware of this and support it. For some children this will be exacerbated by a fear of people in general. Having experienced weeks, or even months, of social distancing, children will have received an implicit message that other people are dangerous. Further, their experience of other people, beyond their immediate family, within their personal space will have been limited. For many the hustle and bustle, movement and number of people in school will be difficult. We need to be aware that many will express their sensory issues and anxieties about the proximity of others physically.</p>	<p>We will be aware of any sensory issues being highlighted and it is imperative that there is control in walking, gathering etc. Calm and orderly, quiet where necessary but always quiet space available. Many children will be used to quiet now and alone time and may crave it. Staff will use the intervention rooms and hall for separating children out, creating small calm group work.</p> <p>Children will be made aware this could be an issue and should speak with a member of staff if they feel they need some down time.</p> <p>Many children have not been in a room with more than a few people for months and life has probably been very quiet, so the classroom will seem very noisy. Staff must ensure the level of noise is kept low where possible, but where it is not then always reminding children where the quiet spaces are.</p> <p>All staff to be vigilant, looking for signs of stress.</p>	<p>All staff SEMH SENDCo</p>
<p>Separation anxieties The majority of children will have become used to being with their parents and immediate family for an extended period. Even for those who are excited to regain their freedom and see their friends, this is a potential source of anxiety. There will be children who struggle with this separation and experience anxiety while they are in school, particularly where their family includes key workers or those going back to work in crowded spaces.</p>	<p>Many children separate from their families easily every day, but in normal circumstances some do not. Staff know who those children are, however, now there may be many more who do not want to leave their family, because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● They can keep their family safe if they are with them ● They can see that the family are ok if they stay home ● They will miss them ● They don't want to be surrounded by lots of people ● They don't want the stress of formal learning again <p>to name but a few reasons. Staff will constantly reassure the children that the family are safe, all working, shopping etc just as we would when a child shows these anxieties. Staff can call parents midday to check in and reassure the child they have spoken to family and all is well.</p>	<p>All staff SENDCo SEMHT HT</p>

	For children particularly distressed we can arrange for children/parent to talk in the middle of the day.	
<p>Special needs</p> <p>The impact of all these issues will be even greater for those with special needs. Their learning will have been impacted as will issues of being or not being in school, managing change, routines and anxieties. There will be particular issues with managing transitions into school and where there is a change of setting.</p>	<p>For most of our SEN children the biggest hurdle will be expectations of behaviour, establishing routine again and reassuring them that all is ok.</p> <p>The class will need a visual timetable every morning to reassure the children how the day will look.</p> <p>The class will need excellent behaviour management using positive reinforcement as many children will have forgotten how to behave (shouting out, talking over each other, poor language).</p> <p>SEMH (Mrs D) will be available to work with children struggling.</p> <p>Children will not remember how to behave immediately and may take a couple of weeks to get those good habits back, so patience will be a virtue!</p> <p>If necessary, create a reward chart with the behaviours we do want to see and at the end of the day discuss with the child how they think they did. The chart should be seen at all times.</p>	<p>SENDCo SEMH</p>
<p>Transitions Highlight when known</p> <p>June/July return</p> <p>If we are to return in the Summer term it will allow us to carry out more 'normal' transitions and prepare the children for the next part of their education.</p> <p>September return</p> <p>If we are not back until September, there will be particular issues with children who are transitioning from one school to another.</p> <p>Year 6</p> <p>Normally, we spend much of the second half of the summer term preparing children for their moves from primary to secondary etc. But potentially there will be many children who have left a school without a chance to say 'goodbye'.</p> <p>Years 2/3</p> <p>The children who are moving building and teacher but staying with us will have missed out on their visits, activities we had prepared and some will be very nervous about not just coming back to school but also having a new teacher and classroom.</p> <p>Year R</p> <p>Children not from our Nursery will not have had their transition visit and have no idea what to expect except they will know that children were not allowed in school due to sickness. This may cause more anxiety than previously.</p>	<p>June/July – this time will be spent focusing on wellbeing, safeguarding, routines, reassuring children and transition.</p> <p>See below 'Staggered entry to school' action plan</p> <p>It will be essential to mark this transition.</p> <p>Options for Year 6 could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • invite children back to have closure, say goodbye and mark the transition. Remember that this should include any staff who are leaving and children making transitions at non-standard times. • We will work with the Secondary schools and LA to see if children can return to primary for the first 2/3 weeks of September to have closure and transition arrangements. 	<p>HT Governors</p>

<p>Uniform</p> <p>Most children will have grown over the time that they have been out of school and so their uniform may not fit. Particularly if we go back to school on short notice, many parents will struggle to get new uniform for their children.</p> <p>This may be exacerbated by financial issues faced by parents without work and issues related to production, import and sale of non-essential goods. So, schools will need to consider relaxation of their uniform codes. Children will need to be welcomed back into school, not penalised for not having the right uniform.</p>	<p>Welcome all children back, with or without uniform! This message will be shared with parents.</p> <p>Where parents are struggling the school will provide them with time to get the correct uniform or we will provide them with uniform where we can.</p> <p>If parents can concentrate on obtaining shoes the school will provide the uniform. For those parents who are not PP they will be billed for the uniform but given until February to pay the full amount back. We would for the first half term accept black trainers where shoes are too expensive.</p> <p>If schools are given extra funds to support opening this can go toward paying for the uniforms for the children with no bill sent out.</p>	<p>All staff Headteacher</p>
<p>Support for staff</p> <p>As school communities we will need to support our staff, including those who have experienced loss and trauma. Some will have been in school without a real break throughout the crisis, while others may have been working exclusively from home. Others will not have been working at all. We need to allow ourselves time to rebuild and reform our school communities. We need to consider particularly the stress Headteachers have faced and their need for support. Many have made difficult decisions and had to respond to a barrage of government guidance which often has been less than clear. This was not part of the NPQH or any learning over 17 years of being a Head ! There is a clear role for governors to support all their staff, particularly school leaders.</p>	<p>Governors will need to focus on wellbeing of staff over the first half term particularly.</p> <p>Data will not be accurate as it will be from Easter break and children will be being assessed carefully over the Autumn term. The newest accurate data will not be available until December. Many children will not have moved forward in their learning and therefore it may take up to 18 months to recover.</p> <p>Staff will not be spending time on monitoring learning, writing reports based on subjects, or implementing any new initiatives over the Autumn term and therefore this information will not be available to Governors. The focus will be on assessing children, supporting children and creating the correct healthy environment so that when children are ready to learn they will fly.</p> <p>No members of staff have had any experience of the last few months and so are not well equipped to inform, advise or manage the situation without some form of doubt. Governors must accept there will be some ‘feeling our way’ based on what we know about how children learn, how we know our families and from DFE / Safeguarding/ Educational psychologist advice.</p> <p>The Governors will need to ensure all their communication with staff is relating to children’s and adult’s wellbeing during Autumn term.</p> <p>The return to school will undoubtedly offer the DSL and DDSL many new disclosures to deal with stressed and emotional parents and this will take a lot of</p>	<p>HT Governors</p>

	time as well as cause emotional upset for the staff. Governors will need to nominate members to support the DSL/DDSL during this time so they can discuss what they are dealing with. Staff will be given information on Supervision and SAS again and reminded of the service available to them.	
Relationships Key to all of this is going to be re-building relationships. We need to be aware that this will not happen overnight. We need to give ourselves time and be kind. We will also need to address that many children have just spent months in only the company of their parent/s and will struggle to separate for a while. They have not played with friends or had to compromise. This may cause tension as friends play games with rules.	Ensure all playing is supervised , at every opportunity reminding children how we play together, compromise, share and work together just as we did before. Always taking time to remind the children how we do things at Mere Brow CE and helping them to regain that identity and the culture and ethos that comes with it. Rewards used all the time to positively promote the characteristics we seek to see. Some children will have reverted back to more childish behaviour and we ask that staff are patient with this and remind the children how we speak at school without reprimand.	All staff including Lunchtime staff

Staggered re-entry to school

Consideration	Action	By Whom?
Do we have enough staff?	Carry out a risk assessment for the number of children and adult ratio. Look at social distancing and carry out a plan to see the number of children who can come back initially. Carry out a risk assessment for daily forest school availability	HT with Governors consulted
There must be only few children in to begin with. The time it takes to entry will be as risk assessments allow.	Entry for children: (in order of entry) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key workers (phase1) ● SEND & FSM any vulnerable (phase 1 total 24 children) ● Year NR16 (phase 2) ● other essential workers returning to work (phase 2 total 40 children) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Final Phase September (80 children) Those not yet returning will continue to work independently on SEESAW classroom until they return. Children in school will continue to work on SEESAW classroom for part of the day. Then time spent on wellbeing, socialising with distance, talking, singing, sports, Art and DT.	HT and consultation Govs SLT

Keep hygiene at its highest	<p>Cleaned am and pm with no children on site allocated 4 hours All tables and door handles, ipads, laptops to be cleaned after every session All children to wash hands on entry to school, before lunch, after lunch and before leaving. Lunches in classroom or outside Children to wash thoroughly when they get home. School to stock up on soap and cleaning products. Review make of soap as last one caused the children's hands to be irritated.</p>	HT Caretaker
Social distancing	<p>This not possible in EYFS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children to have their own pencils and rubbers etc ● Children to have their own water bottle they fill ● Children to work independently on tasks but verbally receive support ● Children to be grouped and activity rotated over the week – ● Staggered play – field, play area, playground – lunch staff on duty ● Fluid drop off and pick up times for parents 8.45-9 and 3 until 3.15 p.m. ● Parents waiting in playground to drop off and pick up children no entry to school ● Children to go to toilet 1 at a time 	HT staff
Finance	<p>There may be possible finance pressures if some staff cannot return to work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supply staff ● Nursery staff ● TAs ● catering ● admin ● breakfast and after school club 	HT Govs
Review:	<p>Daily with staff Weekly with Governors.</p>	HT

Notes: