

# Hemblington Primary School

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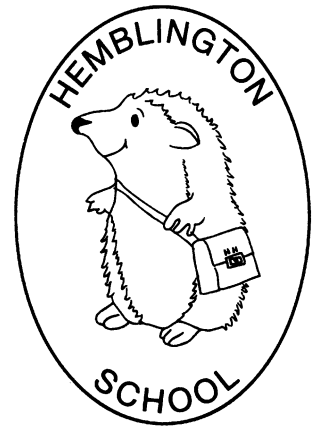
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## Wider school opening from Thursday 11th June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to update you all about the educational provision for pupils at Hemblington Primary School, during these unprecedented times.

As you are aware for the last 3 weeks Hemblington has unfortunately been without Mrs Edmunds, your Headteacher; a difficult time for any school, let alone during these challenging times. Until Ms Collier, your new Headteacher, is able to take up her new post, I will be working in the capacity as the Executive Leader for Hemblington Primary School.

I will be completely honest with you all, the situation that has befallen Hemblington has had a significant impact on the ability of the school to take the necessary measures required to facilitate a safe wider opening for additional pupils.

Staff have been able to provide and sustain a safe learning environment for a small group of critical worker pupils in school and provide learning resources for pupils at home. Regrettably little planning or preparation had taken place prior to half term, in readiness for a safe return to school for any additional pupils, from 8th June.

This week we have been working flat out to try and rectify this situation so that Hemblington is in a position to be able to increase provision for pupils in school, as soon as possible. Unfortunately, this is not a quick fix, as the safety of your children, the staff, your families and the wider community is paramount and there can be no shortcuts.

Very detailed risk assessments have now been undertaken to determine the number of places we can safely accommodate in school in the current situation. These have taken into account: space in classrooms, spaces for circulation, hand washing facilities, toilets, staffing, cleaning, resources, ventilation, access to outdoors and other factors.

On the basis of the risk assessment, at present we simply do not have the capacity to accommodate all the pupils who would like a place. The government has stipulated that schools widen their provision first of all for children in families of critical workers, then to Reception, Y1, and Y6 children.

Our criteria for allocating places will be:

1. Priority one: children in a family where both parents are critical workers, or a single-parent family where that parent is a critical worker, allocated by age, oldest children (and their siblings) first
2. Priority two: children in a family where one of the two parents is a critical worker, allocated by age, oldest children (and their siblings) first
3. Priority three: children in the specified year groups for wider opening – ie Reception, Y1, and Y6, allocated by age, oldest children first

*We will be allocating oldest children first for the following reasons.* Our risk assessment shows that currently we are in a better position to be able to cater for older children. From our experience they are able to work more independently, which will ensure less close contact from adults who are directly supporting them. This will also enable the increased frequency of thorough and regular cleaning to take place. We know from experience that older children are more independent and able to understand and follow distancing measures, and educationally we recognise that a 'socially distanced' formal classroom set-up is better suited to older pupils.

Critical worker children will be grouped together in classrooms according to their Key Stage. Group sizes are determined by the size of the classroom and children will be in groups of 6, 8 or 10 depending on the physical size of the classroom being used. Designated staff will work with each group and Mrs Reeves will be overseeing the work for Year 6 pupils. Both the staff and the group will be kept consistent to reduce social mixing, and they will remain in that group throughout the school day.

All classrooms will be arranged with distancing measures in place, and different groups will not mix within the school day.

**From next Thursday 11th June we will be opening to Key Worker children and Year 6 pupils who have indicated that they would like a place.** Further detailed and important information will be sent out next week to both parents and pupils, ahead of Thursday's return to school.

Children will need to bring a packed lunch to school, which will be kept in their bag under their chair in their classroom. Children will also remain in their class groups for lunch.

The curriculum in school will be based on the home learning, which will continue to be posted on our school website, which we will continue to provide for all children, whether at home or in school.

In the meantime, we will be continuing to get the school ready to facilitate the increased pupil numbers. On Thursday, after school I held an online staff meeting, the first opportunity that myself and Ms Collier have had to meet the whole staff. Staff were briefed as to our current planning position and our plans for the way forward. Staff will be coming into school as of today to start the necessary preparations ahead of next week's wider opening. There is still a monumental amount of ground work to be covered and I have another online staff meeting scheduled for Tuesday. Over the coming days, classrooms will be cleared, signage put in place, areas zoned and further discussions held about procedures to be put in place.

Throughout this week I have been updating and briefing both Ms Collier, Mr Tacon and the Yare Education Trust on the Hemblington situation.

I fully appreciate that this may not be an ideal arrangement for some of you. As a small village school, the physical building constraints put pressure on the number of children that we can safely provide places for at this current time. As and when restrictions ease, we will be looking to increase our in school provision.

The safety of your children, the staff who work in our school and you and your families is paramount and this simply cannot be compromised.

May I also take this opportunity to wish both you and your son/daughter well, to stay healthy and safe and hope that you enjoy your weekend.

Kind regards,

Ian Winter  
Executive Leader Hemblington Primary School