

The COVID 19 pandemic has left the education profession with many questions. At this, time the main one is;

How can we work together to support pupils with a consistent and appropriate education?

The Recovery Curriculum at Hindhayes Infants School



Since the realisation of the impact on our communities in March 2020, teachers have been called upon to alter their educational offer

- At first to support colleagues and families as our children and staff began to fall ill
- Then to provide a child care provision for critical care workers and targeted vulnerable children whilst also
- Ensuring a high quality home learning platform that would ensure equality for all families
- Finally providing an expanded provision for bubbles/pods of safety for small groups of children whilst still supporting and motivating those families who were learning at home.

The last four months have certainly been unprecedented.

We are now in a position to begin rebuilding and recovering. The most recent guidance published on July 2nd outlines how we must now plan for ‘*all children to return to full time school from September*’ and encourages schools to plan the best way to do that.

The Curriculum: We must have returned to a normal curriculum by the end of the summer term in 2021

The guidance states that schools must endeavour to prioritise the addressing of gaps in knowledge. It suggests that they use the additional funding being provided to arrange small group interventions to do this.

‘Teach an ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects from the start of the Autumn term, but make use of existing flexibilities to create time to cover the most important missed content’.

It also states that schools can make adjustments to ensure the wellbeing of the pupils by e.g. additional extracurricular activities and make adjustments to our provision to ensure the social engagement of the pupils.

This is well received by SLT as we have been working together to plan a recovery curriculum that **all classes** will follow in September.

What does the research say?

There is a sense that we are all in this together. A global experience that had provided us with a shared involvement. At Hindhayes, as a staff, it has certainly felt like this. We have all supported each other both professionally and personally. However, the reality for us personally or for our families is that some will have sailed through this storm in a yacht whilst others will have been left with just one oar to try to keep paddling on with. Although the experience will have been shared, the outcome will be different for each of us. This will be the same for our children, the

outcome of this for some of our families will be trauma and trauma leaves us with varying levels of psychological and physiological development implications. The lockdown will have impacted on to:

- Relationships & attachments
- Freedom
- Loss of structure and routine
- Intense and close dynamics between families
- Sense of loss
- Intense loneliness

We also know that for our most vulnerable families the rates of child poverty, DV, Substance abuse, mental illness, child exploitation and family separations have increased. The adverse childhood experiences or ACES that these children may have encountered due to being in the home more will result in fight, flight or freeze behaviours.

Teaching is about a relationship. The relationship that we form with the child. The last interactions that we had with the children may have resulted in a sense of abandonment. Like us, the children may be mourning the same sense of loss. They will need to know that they can trust us to provide them with that consistency that so many of them crave, this may be hard if we have to repeatedly go into localised lockdowns.

Hindhayes Infants does not need a pandemic to tell us how to provide trauma informed education. We know how to nurture and care for our children. We work hard to engage children who are living with the impact of chaotic home lives and neglect. Attachment theories and the wellbeing of our pupils is at the heart of the schoolcommunity that we have built over the last few years. We know that relationships are key and that hopefully compassionate leadership is resulting in compassionate teaching that shows kindness to our children.

In classrooms staff have worked hard to settle the children as they return to school. They have prioritised their emotional wellbeing while also trying to rebuild their phonic skills. Hearing them read and reminding them of forgotten skills that they have hidden in the depths of their long term memory has provided us with a four-day provision for our children. Thank you for what you have done.

What will this look like at Hindhayes?

Informally we have talked about a recovery curriculum for children which will rebuild the

- Relationships
- Friendships
- Routines and structures
- Resilience
- Stamina

Now we want to formalise a **curriculum of compassion: The lived experience for ALL pupils**

A consistently sensitive approach for all pupils to rebuild relationships by having a supported transition through time to repair. We want the children to have the space to rediscover their self-image, confidence, self-esteem and concept of self. It is the unwritten relationships that will repair this period of neglect so we want all staff to be caring, open and accepting to ensure that they connect with each child. This will be done by

- Giving pupils time
- Greeting pupils with a warm welcome and by name in the morning
- Reminding them that you have been keeping them in mind over night or after a weekend
- Helping pupils to have the emotional literacy to articulate their recent experiences
- Attuning and ensuring active listening
- Making them feel like they belong again
- Listening to the voice of the child
- Encouraging self-regulation through emotional coaching
- Using emotional barometers
- Acknowledging fear, loss, bereavement and dealing with it
- Time limited tasks e.g. no more than 30 minutes

During September the children **will not** return to their normal timetable. The guidance says that we can make adaptations and we believe that this is right for our young learners. The children must have the same number of hours within their day but the school day will be altered to meet the requirements of e.g. continued social distancing.

When children enter school they will be provided with activities aimed at **mindfulness**. Games, music, breathing activities, Thai Chi and Yoga can all be used to support the children to then become learning ready for the day.

The content of lessons need to be aimed at re-engagement. We will need to reignite the **awe and wonder** with some of our children and this can only be done through high quality interactive teaching that makes children want to come back to school.

There will also be a need to include as many opportunities for **physical activity** as possible not just when playing outside or participating in non-contact sports but also through use of resources such as active maths.

SLT have decided that all year groups will take part in **Forest School**. The Year 1 children moving into year 2 will have missed over a term of the wealth of opportunity that this program offers and so we want this to continue for these pupils across the Autumn term. Staffing will be adjusted to enable this to take place.

Whilst committing to a program that will keep the heart of our community at the centre of what we will do, we must also find a balance with addressing the gaps that the interruption in our academic year has produced. Teachers must find time to reintroduce children to **early reading and phonic skills** through the prioritising of daily reading. Many children will have missed the opportunity to handle and enjoy real books. With libraries closed and no access to home reading books from school we must now remind them of the importance of real books.

Many of our children will have been completing their home learning on line. Working on mobile phones, computers or IPADS they will have been working on websites and downloading documents. Whilst we do not want to see the use of IPADS in lessons we do want there to be a balance.

Creativity is the key to rebuilding resilience, so let's be creative! We will return to a **whole school topic** of Hope and Kindness which will lead into Wonder and Magic. We hope that this shared project will enable us to rebuild our community and create a sense of belonging. After two weeks we will meet to review the impact of the work and adjust any planning required to maximise this opportunity that we have to be flexible in our teaching.

After this four-week period times teachers must be mindful of the missed experiences and using planning that is being developed to highlight the **prerequisites** that should have been taught for the skills, concepts and understanding that they are introducing the children to. Remember we do not want to create any Jenga in the learning journey of our children.

For our new children in Reception

We will provide a high quality play based experience which will enable the children to have time for self-expression and provide staff with opportunities to complete a wealth of observations of our new children. We will play with and alongside them to enable us to get to know them and take the time to form trusting bonds which will give the children confidence and connection with their new setting.

A two-week period at the beginning of the term will be taken to allow children to visit in smaller groups and teachers to meet with parents as it was not possible to undertake any transition visits during the summer term due to COVID 19. The children will then join the rest of the school in a two week project of wonder and magic in weeks 3 and 4.

All normal procedures for the intake of Reception children will be returned to in the summer term of 2021.

Remember why we are doing this!

Lockdown anxiety is becoming a new phenomenon. Victims of COVID 19 are presenting with PTSD due to their experiences within critical care units and children are increasingly presenting with panic attacks. We do not want this pandemic to rob our pupils of their childhood. Childhood should be built on hope. Recently, in some homes, it will have been filled with fear. We know that fear leads to anxiety which then results in the crippling of interactions and rigidity within our mental health. We need to rekindle hope and rebuild resilience. Remember resilience is that skill

that if you get knocked down by life you can come back stronger than ever. If we plan time for a deep rediscovery of our children now, then we will benefit in the longer term.

Like a phoenix we want them to rise from the ashes and have emotional resilience rebuilt from an armour of steel.

The Embark Reconnection to Recovery and Resilience Pathway through the current pandemic.



Practical Arrangements: A First Look

Class organisation

- There can be no rotas and children will be in class bubbles of 30
- Contact throughout the day will be minimised to reduce transmission and risk assessments must be produced to ensure proportional control measures safeguard the health and safety of the school community
- Pupils to face forward or sit side by side
- Children need to continue to have their own stationary but they can now share e.g. reading books and small world resources

Attendance

- Compulsory for statutory aged children
- Work to re-engage those families who had been hard to reach prior to the pandemic
- Reassure any families who are concerned about returning
- Shielded pupils should attend unless there is a local spike

Timetable

- Staggered lunchtimes, playtimes, drop offs and collections
- Full hours must be covered

Uniform/Belongings from home

- Children can return to wearing school uniform
- Lunchboxes and water bottles OK
- Any resources that support education can go between home and school

Toilets

- There is no need for children to not share toilets as long as there is a good level of hygiene and cleaning.

Possible reinfection

- Schools must plan for a local lockdown
- Classroom resources can be returned to classrooms but they must be kept within a class bubble
- Enhanced cleaning must continue or resources must be quarantined for up to 72 hours
- Template letter to be provided by PHE for schools to give to parents
- In the Autumn term home testing kits will be available for schools to give to parents/staff if they feel that this will enable them to be tested more quickly
- PPE guidelines are as before

Local Lockdown Plan

- Schools should be ready to provide consistency for children should this need to occur- we are!
- Must also be ready to provide on line learning if it is necessary to close a class pod

Cross over of staff

- Wrap around care can reopen (but we may want to keep our children at Hindhayes?)
- Supply teachers and cover TAs etc. can be used across classes to provide cover for e.g. PPA

Social Distancing

- Young children still can't do it (!)
- Minimise time spent with other adults when you can't be more than 1 metre away
- No assemblies or whole school gathering
- If any admin staff can work from home then this can still be planned for
- Where possible children not to touch staff (!)

Visits and visitors

- As before for contractors
- Parents by appointment only
- External and advisory support staff can visit
- Volunteers can re-engage if it will support the running of the school
- Visits can be undertaken if risk assessments are mindful of COVID risks

PE

- No contact sports
- Cleaning of resources between class bubble use
- Plan where possible for active learning

Assessments and Data

- All children will be expected to return to normal procedures of assessment in Summer 2021 e.g. EYFS, phonics screening and KS1 Tasks & Teacher assessment
- We are waiting confirmation of Year 2 pupils taking the phonics screening test in Summer 2021
- No data should be recorded for the year 2020. Any conversations this year with external providers etc. should refer to 2019 data

Behaviour

- Ensure changes to behaviour policy are still relevant
- Remind pupils of COVID 19 behaviours e.g. handwashing and good hygiene

School Lunches

- Children can return to bringing their own packed lunch
- Tables need to be cleaned in between class/year group bubbles
- Considering still having a picnic lunch delivered to the classroom. New menu has been planned for September