

20/05/20

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to you to provide you with an update on our response to the directive from the government regarding the wider opening of schools.

Please also see the letter from the Local Authority, which is being sent to you in a separate email, it is also on the school website.

Whilst we still feel there are some unanswered questions, we have very carefully considered how we might increase numbers whilst maintaining a safe environment for our children and families. In order to make a decision, factors such as available space, hand washing, toilet facilities and staffing ratios had to be taken into account.

Critical to our analysis of the above factors was how the available space could be utilised to allow maximum numbers returning at the same time as ensuring social distancing could be achieved (which is one of the criteria set down by the Government).

As a result our initial phase of opening will be:

8th June – children in Year 6 will be able to come back into school

15th June – children in Year 1 will be able to come back into school

We will also be maintaining the current provision for certain children that has been in place since lockdown measures were instituted.

If you have a child in Year 1 or Year 6, please respond by Friday 22nd to indicate whether or not your child will be returning on the specified dates. Email responses are preferable, but if you are unable to reply in this way, please contact the school office – 790 4641

Any increase in numbers following this initial phase, will only be considered when we are sure that measures we have put in place have been sufficient to mitigate against cross infection and the scientific evidence clearly supports the fact that social distancing is of less concern with younger children.

Whilst we will be doing everything we can to make sure children's return to school is as stress free as possible, I do need to draw your attention to the fact that, whilst we cannot absolutely guarantee "stringent social distancing" of children in a primary school, there are measures we can take. The following precautions are just some of the measures we will need to put in place so that social distancing and infection control standards are implemented:

- **Limiting the number of children in classrooms** – children will be organised into groups of 10 with a teacher. This will inevitably mean that your child may not be with their friends and may not be with their normal class teacher.
- **Staggering break times** – your child will stay in their group and will access playtime and lunchtime with their group, groups will not mix at any time during the day - this is to try to maintain social distancing.
- **Staggering dropping off and collecting** – This will mean that the school day is not the usual 8.45 am to 3.15 pm; parents will be allocated a specific drop off and collection time. Parents of Year 1 children will be directed to an allocated entrance and exit door. As Year 6 are already allowed, with parental permission, to walk home alone, this will now apply to walking to school and as such it will be important that parents ensure their children set off for school at a time that fits with their allocated arrival time. The details of entrances and time slots will be communicated to you week beginning 1st June. I can appreciate that this might feel overly complicated, but it is unfortunately necessary in order to minimise the risk of infection.
- **Use of resources** – as per the guidance we have received, in order to reduce the risk of infection, all soft furnishings, books and small resources that will be difficult to clean will be removed from the classroom. Children will be unable to bring in their school bags, or water bottles from home (water bottles will be provided). We will ensure that each child will be given their own set of equipment to use in the classroom.

If your child is clinically extremely vulnerable, or living with someone who is in this group, they should not come back to school and should continue home learning. If your child is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) you should follow medical advice to decide if they should come back to school. Please refer to [government guidance](#) for further details of these groups.

All children who remain at home for any reason will continue to be supported in their home learning by school staff throughout the Summer Term.

As we move into this next phase, the decision as to whether you send your child back to school is one that you need to make in the best interests of you and your family.

I can understand that this may be frustrating for parents who were hoping that their children could come back to school sooner, but hope that you will be understanding with regards to the very difficult decisions we've had to make to try and keep children and families as safe as they can be in these very unsettling times.

Thank you, as always for your understanding and amazing support in this most difficult of times.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Dunkley