

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020

### Planning for a phased return to school from Term 6

Dear Parents/Carers

I just want to start by thanking you all for your engagement with us to support your child's learning during this period of lockdown. The teachers have worked tirelessly to set work, to engage with families on Dojo and to celebrate learning by producing the weekly newsletter. You have worked tirelessly to support your child with this work and to feed back to us. We would all like to say a huge thank you to you for all your hard work as we are unable to award you dojo points or recognise your achievements as learner (or teacher) of the week on our newsletter, and of course well done to your children to whom we can.

We are now working hard to prepare for a partial reopening for specific year groups. When this happens is still to be confirmed by the government, based on the national statistics, but is likely to be June 8th.

In preparation for reopening, I sent a letter and a short survey to all parents in Years 1, 6 and Reception to help us in our planning and to arrange groupings.

I also sent out the government guidance document to parents and carers, which can be found here.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

If you have not returned your survey, please could we ask that it is sent back to us as soon as possible please.

From the surveys returned, it is clear that there is much reticence to send children back to school whilst the wider advice is to practice social distancing and to stay at home, unless for essential exercise or journeys.

Parents have asked a few repeated specific questions, which I will try and answer here, following the guidance that I have been given from central government.

The main question was about how we will maintain 2 metre social distancing.

The government guidance says this: *We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2m apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to early years and schools, we are taking this into account. Schools should therefore avoid contact with anyone with symptoms, carry out frequent hand cleaning and good hygiene practices, regular cleaning of settings and minimising contact and mixing. Schools should reduce transmission risk by ensuring children, and staff where possible, mix in a small group and keep that small group away from other people and groups.*

This answers the next frequent question, which was 'Will my child be with their own teacher and their friends?'

As we are having to break down classes into smaller groups of no more than 15, we cannot guarantee that your child's teacher will be the adult teaching them. We will always try and put children with their known friends, if their

friend is indeed returning to school, but wider socialising outside this small group will not be possible during the day, as we have been told to keep all groups apart and not mix. One of the main reasons for doing the survey was to help us to plan school groupings and consider friendships.

There were a number of questions about the curriculum: our intention will be that there will be a core of maths and English teaching, as these are the main skills needed as your child progresses educationally but balanced with wellbeing and social activities and as much learning outside as is possible and practicable. We will also try and support transition to secondary with Year 6, and I am meeting weekly with my secondary headteacher colleagues discussing the best way to do this. Transition will also be a focus in the other younger year groups.

Any return to school is likely to be in a phased manner and will be planned so that we can do everything possible to keep our children and staff safe and we will always follow any guidance from the Government.

We will also try as much as possible to prepare the children for the return, so that they know the teacher, classroom and grouping that they will be coming back to, so that any anxieties can be quelled in advance.

The Government have confirmed that families will NOT be penalised for keeping their children off of school during this pandemic and home learning will continue in some form during a phased return, especially for those year groups who have not been included in this initial return.

Finally, thank you for all of the lovely, positive comments that we have received either on our survey forms, via dojo and via the school office. As ever, your children are our priority, we have missed terribly seeing them and teaching them and we cannot wait to see them back – whenever that may be. We also understand fully those parents who have raised concerns about returning safely, and we fully understand that your concerns do not lie with us and what we are doing within school, but more widely with policy decisions that are out of our hands.

Thank you and I will be in touch as soon as there is further news.

Yours Sincerely



Mrs Jenny Ashley-Jones  
Executive Head Teacher

