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Dear Parents and Carers of Reception and Year 1 children

I hope this letter finds you and your families well. We have very much missed you all and I am acutely aware of the amount of time our children have spent away from their education; their friends, the relationships and learning ethos we have worked so hard to build and strive to maintain under normal circumstances.

As many of you are aware, the Government made a decision to recommend that schools begin to consider partial reopening from today. Initially they had suggested three year groups; Year 6, Year 1 and Reception.

My Governors, Senior Leaders and I have spent many, many hours discussing and working through the safest possible options for the children within our schools, given the nature of the buildings and safety requirements in force. I'm certain you will also appreciate the challenges we face logistically in considering the return for Years 1 and Class R, with the additional expectation for maintaining essential Key Worker childcare within our building at this time, which is currently housed within the Year 1 and EYFS provision in school.

At this time, we have taken the decision to open the school only to Year 6 children. In doing this, we can gauge its success and ensure all aspects of our detailed Risk Assessment are adhered to by the older children. You will of course, understand our concerns regarding social distancing for the youngest children in Years 1 and Reception; indeed there are thousands of schools across the nation trialling different versions of the same thing – there is no right or wrong response to this situation and of course, as you know, my actions are always taken with the wellbeing of your children at the very heart of every decision made.

I am writing specifically to you as a parent in Year 1 and Class R, because I have been in receipt of some queries over the last few days and unfortunately, I do not have the capacity to respond to each personally; I hope you can accept the information within this letter as being accurate at the time of distribution and should the Governors and I foresee any changes to admission for partial reopening to expand within the Federation for Years 1 and R, I will contact you in a timely manner.



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Executive Deputy Head Teacher: Mrs V Wilson BEd (Hons)



Any decisions around the return of Reception and Year 1 children will be based entirely upon the calculated safety of the children via Risk Assessment and Local / National guidance submitted to Head Teachers and schools. As you can imagine, we receive a wealth of information and consider these issues on a daily basis. Unfortunately I cannot share any further plans at this point as these will depend upon the return of Year 6 and a thorough evaluation of this, as well as regular review of the national coronavirus status. All Leeds Head Teachers have been party to Local Authority discussion on a bi-weekly basis with over 300 attendees of Council Head Teacher forum meetings. The Local Authority has driven a unified approach to the reopening of schools and the autonomy of such decisions lies with the Head and Governing Body. You will therefore be aware of other schools taking different approaches to our own; at this time and following significant evaluation of our site, we believe the current plans for opening to Year 6 are the safest for our children.

I am sorry that this isn't more helpful if as parents you were hoping to receive a date for the return of Years 1 and R. I do recognise this brings about difficulty in planning; I am extremely conscious that this is a complicated and challenging situation for families working from home at this time, with children who are desperate to come back to school, however, I have to make certain that school is a safe place for our children; I will not rush into this decision-making, nor will I take risks with little children; I will be guided by the logistical and practical demands of this notion and the continual evaluation of circumstances.

I am sorry and sad for all our children who are missing school; education is everything I believe in for children and a return to school for everyone is absolutely what I strive for – but only when I am absolutely convinced it is the right time to do this. In the meantime, I would like to thank you for your patience, for your trust in our strategy and in understanding the rationale behind our decision-making as a Federation.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Richards

Executive Head Teacher

Bramham Shadwell Federation

'Excellence for All'



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