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15<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your families safe and well.

**Thank you in advance of the time you will take in careful absorption of the information within this letter; your patience in awaiting my guidance for the reopening of our school for suggested year groups R, 1 and 6 is appreciated.**

The Government has stated it may be possible to welcome back some pupils into school with a suggested date from the 1 June. My Senior Leadership Team and I, in consultation with our Governing Body, remain responsible for evaluating whether and how it might be safe to introduce our children back to school. This is subject to a significant series of risk assessments, based on the specific circumstances of each school and to date, and in considering all relevant information, **we believe it will not possible for our school to bring back all the pupils recommended by the Government within the timescales you may be anticipating.**

The guidance suggests that all children attending school, should have a teacher; be in groups of less than 15 with socially distanced spacing and that curriculum content and attendance will not be monitored throughout this time. School opening times and opening strategy are left at the discretion of the Head Teacher and in this way, Leeds Heads are currently working together to try to formulate some elements of consistency across the city. **Your child returning to school will not look like a 'normal' school day** for your child (or for you), with varying start/finish times, without the availability of 'wrap around' childcare and with significantly different changes to normal functions. **I anticipate that this will be a very different type of 'schooling' for your child/ren to that which we have become accustomed and have loved.**

As many of you know, closing the school to our children was heart-breaking for myself and my staff; we live for educating and nurturing children and in a 'normal world', we encourage all our children to attend school to achieve their potential every day; we LOVE teaching children but at this time **I am absolutely not prepared to return to this in haste; I need to be able, in my own mind, to guarantee the safety of all our children and my staff, knowing that we have a watertight strategy with specific protocols and functional systems.**

I continue to await further instruction from the Local Authority Health and Safety team, from the Government, from unions, and from the 'Bronze Group' within the Authority to formulate a unified (not necessarily uniform) approach to the reopening of our schools. It is therefore with great caution and precaution that we begin to consider the logistics for opening, along with a systematic procedure so that eventually these three year groups can attend school.



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Executive Head Teacher; Mrs S Richards BSc (Hons) PGCE  
Executive Deputy Head Teacher: Mrs V Wilson BEd (Hons)



As more information is provided, I may be able to suggest for your child some start dates. Of course, as we are repeatedly informed by the Government, these will be **provisional and subject to change**, depending upon the 'science' and statistics. Indeed, it is important to note, that **educational professionals receive critical and essential information at the same time as the public**, usually via a Prime Minister's speech, often leaving us with very little time to plan and with understandable but unrealistic expectation from our stakeholders. Your patience is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for the data you have provided regarding your home and health situations. I have collected the same from staff; this information will assist me in planning the best method for keeping everybody safe. **Many of you are choosing to retain your children at home (with or without shielding status); this is absolutely your prerogative.** Indeed many of my staff members continue to shield completely, (including myself), due to personal or immediate household conditions.

At this stage, **I would anticipate the initial return of Year 6 children followed by Year 1 and finally Reception children. May I once again reiterate that 1st June is unlikely to be the first day for children to return to school and returns will be phased and cautiously planned over time** as initial guidance presented to schools leave many questions for clarification, including the scientific evidence on which these decisions have been made and the lack of specific evidence on the risk to staff, children, parents and the wider community. Our unions are engaging with the Government on this issue today.

**Thank you for your patience during this time.** Your children will continue in the meantime, to receive weekly work and communication opportunities from their teachers. I'm hopeful that you and your child/ren have had the opportunity to have a friendly chat with a member of staff over the last week and always, I will update you with further written information as soon as it becomes available.

Please take good care and continue to look after one another.

With kindest regards,

**Sarah Richards**  
Executive Head Teacher  
Bramham Shadwell Federation  
*'Excellence for All'*



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