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Tuesday 12th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Last night, guidance from the Department for Education was published on how best to reopen schools for Year R, Year 1 and Year 6 whilst also minimising the impact of the coronavirus. This included guidance on a number of measures that schools could take including part-time timetables for children, smaller class sizes and hygiene practices.

I have no doubt that every parent's prime concern is the safety of their child and, as I said in my letter yesterday, it is for each family to make their own determination whether or not their child should be in school.

Below, I detail the main implications from the DfE guidance to help you make this decision.

1. Schools have been advised that staff "*will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work*". The small amount of PPE we do have will be kept for dealing with any intimate care requirements or if needed to deal with children who become unwell with coronavirus symptoms.
2. The guidance admits that early years and primary pupils cannot be expected to follow the social distancing rule of remaining two metres apart from each other. We will, of course, carry out our best endeavours, but we will not be seeking to enforce social distancing.
3. Children will be placed in groups of no more than 15 with either a teacher or a teaching assistant. Our priority would be to ensure that each group is led by a member of the year group team with whom they are familiar. Where at all possible, the same adult will stay with this group of children for the entirety of the week.
4. Pupils or teachers who show symptoms will have access to testing and, where this is positive, the rest of the group will be sent home and asked to self-isolate for 14 days.
5. There will be a drop-off and pick-up rota for parents to minimize adult-to-adult contact. i.e. the school day will not run from 8.45am to 3.15pm.
6. There will be additional cleaning in all classrooms and common areas.
7. Groups of children will be kept apart at break and lunchtimes and toilet facilities will also be monitored to ensure no over-crowding.
8. Parents will not be penalized for keeping children at home during this pandemic.
9. Home-learning will continue during a phased return.



In order to support our initial planning, please can all parents to complete this short survey by Thursday evening. Please complete one survey for each of your children - regardless of their year group.

<https://forms.gle/aKcRNKsak7ryYoRYA>

Please note that this is for our planning only and that no decisions have yet been made regarding the opening of school on 1st June. As soon as we have finalised our plans, we will share these with you and we are hoping to do this next week.

I wish that I had answers for you. I wish that I could tell you that your children could be back in school and that we could keep them safe. We will, of course, do everything we can to limit contact and maintain hygiene standards which will reduce any risk but the risk still remains. If I've learnt anything in my six years as a Headteacher is to be honest, even when you don't want to be.

Over the past few weeks I have been inundated with supportive messages and appreciation of our stance that the children's wellbeing comes first. I know that some parents are concerned about their children's progress but I have no doubt that, once we are out of this, the children will continue to thrive as they did before this situation developed.

If you would like to contact me directly about this, please email me at headteacher@bridge.kent.sch.uk

Thank you again for your constant support and understanding.

My thoughts and those of the whole Bridge team are with you all.

Yours sincerely,



James Tibbles,
Headteacher