

Headteacher: James Tibbles

Tel: 01227 830276

Email: office@bridge.kent.sch.uk

Web: www.bridge.kent.sch.uk

Bridge & Patricbourne CEP School
Conyngham Lane
Bridge, Canterbury
Kent
CT4 5JX



Thursday 25th June 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Earlier this week, I wrote to you all with the broad outline of a proposal that would seek to offer all children in the school the opportunity to spend a week back with their current class teacher before the summer holiday. Following discussions with the Local Authority, staff and governors, I then needed to see how much support this proposal had amongst the parents before making a final decision whether or not we could enact this.

I'd like to start by thanking everyone who took the time to complete the Google Form this week. I don't doubt that you are probably as sick of Google Forms as I am but it is a very useful tool to quickly gather parental perspectives and opinions. I am also appreciative of the parents who phoned or came to speak to me on the playground about their concerns and I trust that those who did so were reassured.

Whilst there was a great deal of support for the principles of the proposal (approx. 95% of respondents), the practicalities of the plan mean that, unfortunately, we won't be able to proceed. This was always going to be an ambitious plan and the decision whether or not we could implement this would have always come down to cold, hard numbers of children in school.

This was a difficult, and individual, decision for parents and I'm touched that so many parents got in touch with their messages of support, however the reality is that we have a significant number of parents who are critical workers and completely understandably, are reliant upon their children being in school so that they can continue to support the NHS and education system (as just two examples).

It is at this point I feel that I need to directly address a point of misinformation of which I am aware has been shared via social media.

I was contacted on Tuesday by a parent who expressed their concern that that my proposal did not have the support of the Local Authority and was against the guidance issued by government. To be clear, throughout this whole process I have been in consultation with both our Area Education Officer and our Improvement Advisor who have both supported this proposal. This support was due to the fact that we were not removing the educational provision for children but were asking parents who were able to do so to voluntarily give up this right for a week to enable us to support children who have not been able to spend any time in school.

I strongly believe that the I and the governors have met our legal obligations in this process but, more importantly, acted in a way consistent with our Christian ethos and values – hence my desire to rectify this misinformation.

I don't doubt that many of you (and your children) will be disappointed by this outcome and were particularly looking forward to spending some time in school. Mr Taylor and I are developing a 'Plan B' and I will have more information about this in tomorrow's newsletter.



In the short-term, this means that the current arrangements for children coming into school has not changed. We continue to support children of key workers and we will be welcoming back some more Year 6 children on Monday.

Our numbers of key worker children continue to grow and we are now running four 'bubbles' of key workers. This means that we are currently unable to offer more places to Year R and 1 as hoped, however we will be able to open a new 'bubble' on Monday 6th June and in tomorrow's newsletter, parents of Year R and 1 children will be able to request a space in this new group.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Tibbles". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

James Tibbles,
Headteacher