

Friday 15th May 2020

Dear Parent(s)

Return To School Update

We hope you are keeping safe and well and the children are enjoying their home learning. We thank our staff for their continued hard work in delivering this programme and to you, our parents, in supporting your children at home. We have continued to receive positive feedback from you but are also fully aware that the children are now very much looking forward to a return to school. We are also looking forward to seeing them and welcome opportunities for their ultimate return.

Since 23rd March, in line with the scientific advice, nurseries, schools and colleges have remained open to a priority group of children and young people, children of critical workers and identified children by the school. Schools may now be able to start a phased reopening at the start of June, as announced by the government on 10th May when laying out its plans for the easing of the coronavirus lockdown. This will be dependent on key factors outlined by the government, including the rate of infection decreasing, so a phased return to school is a conditional plan which can be amended at any time.

The initial year groups to potentially return to school from the week beginning 1st June will be Reception, Year 1, and Year 6, unfortunately we are unable to allocate sibling outside of these year groups. We thank parents of children in these year groups for your prompt response to our survey, to help us understand your views relating to your child and family circumstances when considering sending your child back to school. It is clear that we all believe school is the best place for children to learn and to develop positive mental health wellbeing as children have social interactions with their peers and teachers. However, we also recognise the reservations expressed by a significant number of parents about sending their children in before further scientific evidence is provided by the government. We understand and sympathise with parental views and would like to clarify that no action will be taken against parents who wish to remain with their children at home.

Reception, Year 1, and Year 6 have been prioritised because they are key transition years. Risk assessments will be put in place to minimise risks associated with coronavirus, so that sensible measures can be put in place to control those risks for children and staff. This will include children being organised into small groups with consistent staff, with groups not mixing with each other to reduce risks. We also must evaluate staffing levels and the school environment to support social distancing measures. As you appreciate, we are working on the planning and implementation of these measures and await further guidance from the Education Secretary and Department of Education in consultation with teacher unions.

Existing arrangements for children of critical workers and identified children will continue. These children will not form part of the smaller groups of phased in year groups but will remain in the groups they are presently in. This is to reduce possible contact between different groups of children to limit potential risks.

It is intended that other year groups will be phased in and await further details, dependent on government guidance. We will update you with further details of how we intend to implement the initial phasing in of year groups back to school.

We thank parents for ensuring all payments made to school are up to date. We would like to remind those with outstanding balances to bring them up to date to enable us to have a clearer picture of how Covid has affected the school's income, in order to plan for next year.

We would also like to remind parents that children should have a change of clothes each day to help control contamination. It would also be helpful for parents to continually remind children of the importance of washing hands regularly and avoid physical contact with others, promoting safe social distancing. This is particularly important when preparing your child for their return to school.

We are missing you all and particularly miss the children. We understand that this week has been difficult for children in Year 4 who were due to be on their school journey to Butlins and Year 6 who prepared hard for their SATs and were looking forward to their school journey to PGL next week. We have been thinking of them and hope they are at least able to be in contact with their friends. We hope you have a good weekend and we will continue to update you with further developments.

Regards



Jean Connery
Co-Headteacher



Robert Coyle
Co-Headteacher