



Maryport Church of England Primary School

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Headteacher Mrs J Ormond

'Learn, achieve, shine'

17th May 2020

Dear Parents/carers,

I write to you at the end of a very anxious week. Since the Prime Minister made his announcement last Sunday outlining the Government's proposals for the reopening of schools from 1st June, there have been 14 guidance documents released or updated, some after 7pm! I have worked as a teacher for 26 years, 10 of those as a headteacher and never have I felt so frustrated and upset as I have done this week.

The guidance sent out by the Government lists a number of measures they suggest schools can implement to try to minimise risk –

- Reopen initially for the pupils of key workers followed by our youngest children (nursery, reception, year 1), then Y6. It is their 'ambition' that all children will then be back in school before the summer holidays.
- Children in school to be split into groups of no more than 15. Each group (or 'bubble') is to remain in the same room, with the same adult all day and cannot mix with any other bubble. This would mean staggered play and lunch times. Children of key workers are to form their own bubble and will not mix with their year group bubble.
- Within their bubble, children and adults will need to try and adhere to the 2m social distancing guidelines. The government have suggested we separate the desks around the room and introduce a one way system in the corridors.
- Within all the classrooms, we have been advised to remove all soft toys, furnishings and any piece of equipment that cannot be easily washed each day. This means we will not be able to provide dolls, teddies, play-dough, sand, dressing up clothes etc. children would also not be able to bring in their own toys or equipment and will instead have a personal pack of stationery so they don't share pencils, scissors etc. Reading books will need to be on a rotation system so they have 72 hours to 'quarantine' between use.



From my years of working in schools, I know that some of the measures outlined above will be very difficult to implement. 3-6 year olds are social creatures who want to cuddle each other, hold hands and play with a wide range of resources. They cannot sit at desks for prolonged periods of time and they do not understand they cannot go and play beside their friends. The reason common childhood illnesses spread so easily in schools is because of the close physical contact we have all the time.

As I mentioned earlier, there is nothing I would like more to have the school full again of happy, chattering, healthy children and staff. In the next few days, taking into account all the guidance documents received from the Government and the Local Authority, I will be undertaking a full risk assessment with our Governors. I will also be liaising with the other Maryport schools. Only then will I be in a position to develop a plan of how we as a school can minimise some of the risks associated with a phased reopening. I speak for all the staff of our school when I say we miss the children, we want school to reopen but only when it is safe to do so - we do not want to put our pupils, their families and ourselves at risk.

Thank you to everyone who responded to the survey sent out earlier in the week. We received 208 replies and all of your comments have been forwarded to the Governing Body. Towards the end of this coming week, it is likely that I will ask for further responses from you as our reopening plan takes shape. As always, your continued support is very much valued and appreciated.

Please be assured that the safety of your children, our families and my staff will be at the forefront of any decisions made.

Take care and stay safe,

Mrs Ormond
Headteacher

