*19/05/20*

*Dear parents and carers,*

*I have been asked by the Government to create a plan to safely reopen school, to certain pupils only, from 8th June. In order to plan effectively, I need to find out some information from you.*

*Do I want the children and staff all back in school? Of course I do - I miss them all so much. But, school will be a very different place – certainly this side of the summer holidays.*

 *I am not going to write and tell you we can achieve social distancing and guarantee total safety in a school. We can always make things safer, we could perhaps reduce the risk, but as soon as lots of children return, the risk will be there.*

*Children will be sorted into what the government are calling* ***‘bubbles’****. The class teacher/ support assistant can only be in one ‘bubble’ and the ‘bubbles’ cannot mix at all.*

*We would decide on the ‘bubbles’ –we cannot guarantee all children would be with their friends and they will have to try to remain at least 2 metres from others at all times.*

*This is necessary so that* ***any outbreak of the virus can be tracked and traced*** *and those people who have been in* ***the affected ‘bubble’ can isolate and be tested****.*

*The bubbles are small because with proper social distancing, classrooms can only accommodate between 8 and 12 pupils. With children in R, 1 and 6, split into ‘bubbles’, in addition to key worker children already attending school, there would be in excess of 100 children; I would need 12+ classes to accommodate numbers, which if all 3 years came in together just isn’t possible.*

*Children will have to remain at their desks in older year groups or in designated areas for younger children and keep to their own equipment.*

*For the youngest children this will be extremely difficult. They won’t have access to all the practical resources they would normally have because they all have to be kept clean to avoid infection. Our youngest children learn by touching, doing, being with others and sharing – all of which will have to be very limited as far as is possible.*

*As always we will make the experience in school as positive as possible, but again it will not be formal teaching as such, and we recognise that children will be anxious – small groups will help with this. We haven’t been able to work it all out yet –last week alone there were 90 updates from the DfE- as you can imagine the complexity of this situation is enormous but our senior leadership team and Governing Body are considering a carefully thought out plan to maximise safety.*

*As a parent myself, I would want to know exactly what school will look like. Should you decide that you wish for your child to stay at home, that is absolutely fine and I assure you I will totally understand and respect that; there will be no penalties if you make this decision. What I do ask though please, is that you decide one way or the other – it will take a lot of organising and we need to know firm numbers.*

*During the next 48 hours, school staff will telephone you to find out if you are requesting a place for your child to return to school. We would like you to consider:*

#### **•           your child may not be taught by their class teacher or a member of staff familiar to them**

#### **•           they may not be taught in a class with their friends as classes would be limited to 10**

####  **children**

#### **•           opportunities to mix in social groups won’t be permitted**

#### **•   There will be limited resources in classrooms**

#### **•           the school day is likely to be shorter with staggered start and end times**

#### **•           there will be no after school provision**

#### **•   school will operate a 4 day week (Monday to Thursday) to allow for enhance cleaning**

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*Please be advised that if you request a place be made available for your child, do not expect that there will be one available immediately. There will be a delay of 48 to 72 hours before a place is confirmed to ensure that schools are as safe as possible for staff and pupils and that social distancing can be prioritised.*

*Thank you for the time you have given to reading this – I appreciate that it is a difficult decision to decide what to do with your most precious of gifts – your children; please listen out for the phone ringing over the next 48 hours.*

*Should you want to discuss any element of this letter further, please email me on* *info@st-john.blackpool.sch.uk**.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Mrs N Galloway*

*Head Teacher*