



St. Nicholas C of E Primary School

School Road, Marton Moss, Blackpool, FY4 5DS

Tel: 01253 966150 email: admin@st-nicholas.blackpool.sch.uk
www.st-nicholas-blackpool.org.uk Headteacher: Miss C Taylor, BA QTS, NPQH



18th May 2020

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you to explain the work we are currently undertaking in response to the Government's announcement concerning schools potentially re-opening, at the earliest 1st June and the other year groups before the end of term.

As I am sure you are aware, the Government is asking schools to consider if it is possible to welcome Year 6, Year R and Year 1 children back to school from the 1st of June. They have asked us to re-visit our risks assessments and assess the risk of accepting the children they suggest, back into school.

This is an interesting challenge because when you usually assess the risk, you know what the risks are and you then can make an assessment if they can be controlled to an acceptable level. We do not know what the risks are concerning children spreading Coronavirus - it is very difficult to assess the overall risk to children, their families and staff and if it acceptable or not. Recently, when asked about the transmission rate among children during the Government hearing, the Department of Education Scientific Advisor said the evidence is 'mixed', and there's a "low degree of confidence in evidence they (children) might transmit it less." In other words, there is no evidence that children transmit the virus any less than adults do.

The Government guidance concerning re-opening school states that if we adhere to the guidance it "reduces risk of increasing the rate of transmission." In other words, if we do what they suggest instead of doing nothing when the children return then it will reduce the risk of increasing the number of people getting coronavirus. However, it does not state how safe it is and it has been confirmed that the Department of Education has not carried out any modelling of the re-opening guidance on the rate of infection or how practical it is in a school.

I have shared this information with you, not as some have suggested as "scaremongering" but I believe I have a duty as Headteacher to share with you the information that we have and are using to make our plans for the future and will help you with your decisions moving forward.

So, where do we go from here?

We do what we always do, we put the children, you and the staff at the heart of our decisions.

So, we are completing several risk assessments, taking into consideration the Government guidance. From this process, we are slowly formulating a plan on **who, when** and **how** some children could possibly return to school but not before the **8th of June** – following our holiday pattern.

We have not yet finalised the plan, however I can say with some certainty that **not** all Year R, Year 1 and Year 6 children will return on the first day. Opening to **all** these children, would be a Health and Safety risk and would not respect the physical or mental health of the children or the staff.

This process is the exact opposite of 'lockdown', which happened quickly on one day for everyone; this process **must** be taken in small, considered steps to ensure we are keeping the risk as low as we can – learning, as we carefully and safely move forward.

Our next step is to ask the relevant parents at each stage of the plan if you will be sending your child in to school, as we need to make a fully informed decision at the appropriate time.

We will then send you our proposed plan detailing which children, on what days and in which week we feel it is safe to invite back to school and what control measures we will be putting in place for you and the children. The plan will of course be adapted with respect to every risk assessment review. This process has the full support of the Governing Board.

I thank you for your understanding, patience and invaluable support for the school and myself.

Kind regards

Miss C Taylor

Headteacher