

Friday, June 19, 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you so much for your support, feedback and thanks over the last few weeks as we have set about reopening school. Schools are places for children and it is delightful to see children back in classrooms. We are working hard to bring as many children back as possible and I have included some updates for key year groups below. Where a year group is not mentioned specifically but they have already returned (Y1, 6 and 10), arrangements continue as communicated. Please note this letter is two pages long and there is important information for parents on page 2.

Reception Class

We are looking forward to welcoming Reception students back into school from the 22nd June for full time classes. A letter confirming arrangements has been sent home.

Year 5

I am pleased to inform parents that we are likely to be in a position to reopen to children in Y5 from Monday 29th June. Specific information will follow for parents of Year 5 children although to help and support our planning. We would appreciate parents completing the form on the academy website to indicate whether they intend for their children to return. We hope to be able to welcome back all Y5 children who wish to return. It is really important that the form is completed to help us to do this.

Years 2-4

We have no choice (at this time) but to follow the Government rules meaning we can only have 15 children in a class. Since I wrote last week, through a risk managed process, more staff are returning to work. Once Y5 are back in school, we will not have enough classrooms or staff to bring any more children in Y2-4 back before September. I wanted to apologise to parents of children in Y2-4 that we can't get children back in. Even if all staff who are shielding returned we would still only have enough space and staff to accommodate 15 more children. If any parent in these year groups needs to return to work before September and can't look after children at home without creating significant financial hardship because of the lack of work, please contact Mrs. Latham at the academy and we will try our very best to accommodate more children in our key worker group.

Years 7-9

As noted last week, the Government will not allow us to return these year groups to lessons, despite us knowing this is very important. All children in year 7-9 will receive a letter next week inviting them into school for 2 face to face sessions with a teacher to discuss home learning and for a general catch up before the end of the summer term. I am sure you can appreciate the challenge of arranging two sessions with 360 children, given the need for stringent social distancing and reduced staffing. As such the appointment times cannot be changed.

Summer Provision

The academy will not be open over the Summer holiday period in order to allow for essential planned work to take place. A limited offer will be available through Blackpool council to support parents of key workers and more vulnerable students. I will provide further details of this in the coming weeks but I wanted to alert you as early as possible to the fact that the provision will not be at Unity Academy.

Summer Free School Meals

The Government announced this week that they are continuing to provide free school meals for all eligible children over summer. We have been informed that this will be through vouchers and that we can't provide food hampers. Our understanding is that a voucher will be issued at the start of the holiday for £90 per eligible child to cover the full 6 weeks. The administration team in school need accurate and up to date email addresses to issue these. If we do not have an email address that works for families, we cannot issue vouchers. If you believe you are eligible for Free School Meals and have not applied for them, a form will be on the website by Monday for you to complete.

Many thanks for your continued support and patience as we have responded to numerous changes to Government advice - it is truly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

S. Cooke

Mr S Cooke
Headteacher