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Dear Families,

COVID-19 UPDATE: POSSIBLE WIDER OPENING OF SCHOOL

I did not write a newsletter piece last Friday because like you all, I was waiting to see whether the Prime Minister's speech on Sunday would bring clarity to some of the media speculation surrounding the reopening of schools. I am sure, like me, you will have watched that speech with great interest, as well as yesterday's press briefing where he announced proposals for easing lockdown restrictions over the coming weeks. One of the proposals put forward was the possible wider reopening of schools to include all Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils from 1st June, in addition to the key worker and vulnerable children currently attending, with the caveat that this step would be dependent on the medical evidence.

Last night and this morning, we have received more detailed guidance from the government and Department for Education on what this might look like in practice. The government has also produced guidance and information for parents – the link is below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

Within the guidance, it is acknowledged that social distancing is incredibly difficult to achieve in school settings, particularly for the youngest children. What the guidance asks school leaders to do is further risk assess our settings and plan accordingly so that we make our school as safe as possible for children, staff and our wider community to return more widely.

Over the next few days, I will be working with my school team to do precisely this. Our aim will be to do everything in our power to support more children coming back into school. We really do miss you all and can't wait to have you back. We will investigate what steps we can take to reduce the risk of this horrible infection spreading if the government asks us to open more widely on 1st June. Some steps may feel uncomfortable, difficult or even 'annoying' at first, for example staggering start and finish times, changing entrances and exits etc. However, please be assured that myself and my team will always have the safety of you, our community, at the heart of our decision-making.

To help us better understand your anxieties, your needs, your situations, I would appreciate it if you would spend 5 minutes or so completing a short survey to help inform our planning and the decisions we take over the next few days. The link to the survey is below, and the office will also put it on the website and Twitter feed for you to access.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LCLJ7YF>

As always, I will continue to pass on to you information and guidance as soon as it is made available to us. I will also communicate our ideas and plans for wider reopening so that you are able to make your own, informed decision about what is best for your child and your family. In the meantime, please take care of yourselves.

Stay alert
Control the virus
Save Lives

Very kind regards
Miss Stockley