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*As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace
1 Peter 4:10*

Wednesday 20th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Re: Reopening of Schools

As promised, I am now writing to you to set out our plans for reopening our school. The information received from the DFE has prioritised pupils' return as:

1. Key workers' and vulnerable children
2. Reception and Year 1 children
3. Year 6 children

Followed by extending this to all other children by the end of the Summer Term.

The guidance points out that the science behind this government decision is:

- Severity of disease in children – there is high scientific confidence that children of all ages have less severe symptoms than adults if they contract coronavirus (COVID-19)
- The age of children – there is moderately high scientific confidence that younger children are less likely to become unwell if infected with coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Numbers of children going back – limited initially to the three year groups then increased gradually as the science permits
- Systems to reduce small groups of pupils and staff coming into contact with each other – smaller class sizes (bubbles) spread out across settings

We have been busy in school making preparations for the reopening. **We have completed a full risk assessment which is available for you to view on our website.** We have acquired the necessary resources to ensure that we are fully equipped for our cleaning protocols, signage around school, individual stationery packs for pupils etc. However, we require personal, protective equipment (PPE) in order to provide first aid for children and to administer intimate care. Norfolk County Council promised us that they were sourcing PPE for us, but they have not come forward with this. We have had to make our own arrangements but we are awaiting supplies. The governors and I are in agreement that we will not reopen the school until we have PPE (including fluid resistant masks) available for our staff.

Therefore, the more likely date for reopening will be 8th June and not 1st of June as is being promoted by the Government. This date will be subject to supplies of PPE being available and scientific and Government advice. Many Norfolk primary schools and schools across England are in a similar position to us.

Despite the fact that the Government are prioritising the youngest pupils for return to school, we do not feel that this is right for our school and our children. Therefore, we will be inviting our Year 6 pupils back to school on the 8th of June followed by Y1 pupils on the 15th June and Reception pupils on the 22nd June. We will continue to be partially open for vulnerable children and the children of key workers.

I would like to gauge how many parents/carers are willing, when the time comes, to send their children back to school and would be grateful if you could complete the survey at the link below if you have a child in Reception, Year 1 or Year 6. In order to make this decision, you need to be aware of the following:

- Young children cannot socially distance – it will be impossible for us to guarantee that we can keep your children safe from the virus even with smaller classes
- Older children can socially distance more easily but classes will need to be split into smaller groups (the government recommends 15: to ensure social distancing this would be around 6 to 8 in our small classrooms and 15 in our hall)
- Children would stay in their small group (bubbles) away from other people and groups
- This includes playtimes and lunchtimes (and eating lunch)
- Not all children will be able to have their class teacher in their group
- Some groups will be led by an experienced teaching assistant
- Children will have an allocated seat which they will need to stay at when they are learning in the classroom
- Although children will be learning, the school will place an emphasis on well-being and mental health
- All previously planned large gatherings (KS2 leavers' performance, Leavers' Assembly, Sports Day, Summer Fete) will not take place
- Children with conditions which render them clinically extremely vulnerable are not expected to attend school
- Children who live with someone with conditions which render them clinically extremely vulnerable are not expected to attend school unless strict social distancing is possible
- To manage risk of transmission, staff might choose to wear PPE
- Stringent additional handwashing and cleaning will need to take place throughout the day to help manage the risk of infection
- Children and staff who present with COVID-19 symptoms will be isolated and sent home
- Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time

It is important that you have as much information as possible when making the decision as to whether to send your children back to school. I have already received a number of questions from parents/carers. I will create a FAQs sheet of all of the questions being asked and put this on our website so that you can refer to this now and in the future.

The Governors, staff and I are very keen to welcome the children back to school. We have missed them tremendously and are concerned about their academic and social progress. However, we have a responsibility to ensure the safety of our staff, children and families.

In order that we can continue making strategic plans for the coming weeks, if you have a Reception, Year 1 or Year 6 child, I would urge you to complete our short survey at this link:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=IOM_8mowLU-yDq7UATSA5Y8H5qaSppGpgWIDd3ryilUMFRWTjgySVEzQ1IHUzJDUjFLTU1FUktSUI4u

Please respond by midday on Friday 22nd May. We will use these numbers to decide our strategy for a safe return.

Thank you for your kind support and cooperation during this challenging time. We have been heartened by the feedback from our children and parents. Thank you for placing your trust in us to do what is right for everyone.



Laura Green
Executive Head Teacher