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14th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly I'd like to thank you for your patience at this time of uncertainty with all the anxieties this is creating. No doubt you will have been following the government's announcements and be aware that YR, Y1 and Y6 may possibly be offered a place in school from 1st June, depending on various criteria being met.

PLEASE READ TO THE END OF THE LETTER AS WE NEED YOUR VIEWS

I am working with local heads to establish how this may look moving forwards. There are many protective factors that we are considering, including using more classrooms and the hall and also having fewer pupils in each area. Following the Government guidance, groups of up to 15 pupils are likely to mix within their own group, but not with other groups in school at the same time. We also have to consider how we will staff this, whilst continuing to manage remote learning for other pupils.

As is always the case, the safety and well-being of all the children in our care is paramount and everything that we do will try to ensure the very best support for them whether that is at home or in school. Although we will have some families (and the children themselves) that are extremely keen to get back to school, there will also be those that are worried and are very anxious about children returning, for a variety of understandable reasons.

So, there are many challenges, but comprehensive planning is going on. Whilst we will do whatever we can to ensure that social distancing and hygiene are paramount, I don't need to explain to you that, for younger children, keeping 2m apart is virtually impossible.

Attendance at School:

Sending your child to school is optional, and there will be no fines for non-attendance. In order for us to plan, it would be helpful to know how many of you intend - at this stage - to take up the offer of a place. Once we have this information, we will be able to make decisions on whether all, or only some, of our pupils can be accommodated. At this stage, if every child wanted a place, we would not be able to offer this, but I suspect that some of you will not want to do this.

Priority Groups: As well as opening for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, the current expectation that schools will provide childcare for 'key worker' families and 'vulnerable children' remains. If we are able to re-open school on **Monday 1st June**, the Emergency Childcare Hub at Wirksworth Junior School will cease to exist and each school that has been involved will have to make arrangements at their own school for these children. The criteria for those that are entitled to this provision has not changed, but we appreciate that for some families with key workers, circumstances may be changing. Please let us know if this affects you.

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Pupil Learning: Until there is a further change in the guidance, we believe that we will be able to continue offering the learning at home menus for all year groups and we will use this as the basis for the provision for the children who are in school as well. There may be a slight change in how this looks and the amount of daily input we can provide for those at home, but we are confident we can maintain a high-quality of provision for everyone, as we have been doing since the schools closed.

Parental Survey:

In order to plan for the possible re opening we need to know how many of you are intending sending your children to school from Monday 1st June.

Later Phases: At the moment, the only statement in the guidance regarding the children in other year groups is as follows:

“Our ambition is to bring all primary year groups back to school before the summer holidays, for a month if feasible, though this will be kept under review. We will only welcome back additional year groups if the most up-to-date assessment of the risk posed by the virus indicates it is appropriate to have larger numbers of children within schools. The safety of children and staff is our utmost priority.”

There is no further clarity on what this means and whether it would be all children all of the time. Our approach at the moment is to try not to worry about that too much and to concentrate on what we do know and to plan for the things we have been asked to provide.

Survey

Please complete the survey on the link below by **Monday 18th May**. It would be very useful if - when asked to leave your name - you put your **CHILD'S NAME**. If you are unable to make the link work, then can you please email school to let us know your initial plans for after half term.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ZebS7UcdIEutHV4l8f4H12NhENvCCpZGtlcCG-Oowd1UNUFISERGRDg2VVNOUE9DVk9VMjQzQ01SVS4u>

I will send out further details in due course, including what measures we will take to ensure safety as much as possible, but for now, an idea of numbers would be extremely helpful.

We all continue to wish you and your families well during this time and look forward to when we can all be together again!

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Liz Foster
Headteacher

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