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22nd May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

As you may be aware, there have been some new guidelines issued by Derbyshire County Council this afternoon which headteachers received at 2.00 pm. I have included their press release at the end of this letter for your information.

With this in mind, I have spoken with Gill Donaldson our Chair of Governors, local Headteacher groups and also with staff. We have taken the decision to **only open for key worker children** from Monday 1st June 2020. This provision will now be at Cromford School rather than the Wirksworth Hub – between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm.

We then hope to be able to move to a second phase of opening for pupils in Years R, 1 and 6 from 8th June 2020.

Other schools in the area may well make different decisions, based on their own capacity and pupil numbers, but we need to ensure that the number of pupils in school can be safely accommodated with the DCC guidance.

I am sorry for any difficulties or disappointment that this causes to you and the children, but we are in an ever-changing situation and trying to respond as effectively as we can.

If you need key worker provision from 1st June and have not already let Mrs Hamilton know, please get in touch so we can put plans in place.

Many thanks for all your support.

Yours sincerely

Liz Foster
Headteacher

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Statement from Councillor Alex Dale, Cabinet Member for Young people at Derbyshire County Council – 22 May 2020

“We support the Government in its ambition to see schools opened up to more pupils as soon as it is sufficiently safe to do. To do this we’ve been working flat out to support schools in interpreting the guidance and planning to admit the target year groups announced by the Prime Minister on 10 May.

“This is an incredibly complicated issue to work through. Unfortunately, the guidance so far issued by the Department for Education has not always been entirely consistent or clear on some key aspects and this has created some issues for schools and the council.

“Due to the challenges that we’re having to work through with schools, it is clear now that many primary schools in Derbyshire will not be able to admit the additional year groups (reception, year one and year six) that the Government had envisaged by 1 June. This is because the latest advice from the Government is that children need to be 2m apart in classrooms, and that it is not safe to rota children through the week and more time is needed to work through these issues.

“The Department for Education have been absolutely clear with us that the priority remains the children of key workers and those who are vulnerable. In turn we’ve made clear to all schools that from 1 June their first priority should be aiming to increase the number of children from these groups.

“Then we have advised that they should also continue to plan for how they might accommodate children from the other key year groups (reception, year one, year six, year 10 and year 12).

“Every school in Derbyshire is different and their approaches to offering more places back in classrooms for our children and young people will vary.

“If schools do admit children on 1 June from the key year groups they will need to make sure they have the room to do this safely.

“We hope that secondary schools will be able to offer some face to face learning for year 10 and year 12 students, due to the greater flexibility they have in terms of space.

“We will continue working with schools to identify when they will be able to admit whole-year groups in the coming weeks, although for many of our schools this will still be challenging.

“I want to thank headteachers, school employees and governors who have worked extremely hard over recent weeks as they plan for 1 June. I’d also like to thank parents and carers in advance for bearing with us and their local schools while we continue to work very

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hard to deliver on our collective ambition to get more children back to school as soon as possible.”

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