

28th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are all keeping safe and well and managing to keep your spirits up.

It has been lovely to talk to lots of you on the phone and I know the teachers have really enjoyed catching up with you and your children. There are some who we ring and the number is not working so we are emailing. Please can you ensure you let the school office know if you have changed your home or mobile number.

We sent out more home learning yesterday and it is also all on the website. As with all the home learning, pick and choose what works best for you. Please do not get worried or stressed about it. If you are feeling concerned please ring or email. Often a chat over the phone can be really helpful.

For children who are still coming into school, we are closed on Friday 8th for the bank holiday. Also, although it has now started raining, it has been very sunny lately. Hopefully the sun will be out again soon so please can you make sure your child comes in with suncream and a hat on when it's hot.

You will be aware there is lots of speculation about when the schools will reopen. I know no more than you. I watch the daily briefings as everyone else to find out the latest information.

I can't wait for the school to reopen but similarly to lots of other headteachers I am contacting the local authorities and unions to try and find out answers and have some guidance and reassurance. We want to reopen as soon as possible but only when it is safe to do so.

We are asking things like -

Children, teachers and Headteachers have died from Coronavirus. More information is coming out now about children being affected by the virus. How can we ensure everyone is safe for children to return in larger numbers? What about staff with underlying health conditions? If they need to stay off long term how will we be able to maintain staff ratios?

We were told initially not to order ppe as it was needed for the nhs. If we are now told we need it, can supply be guaranteed? Children cannot be expected to wear masks, aprons and gloves but if staff do, what are the time limits and expectations for changing aprons etc in a school setting? What will be the long term effects on SEN and young children seeing staff in masks day in day out?

If schools are to socially distance, what will that look like? How can we adequately socially distance young children, even with small class numbers, split break times etc? What about shared areas, toilets, corridors, door handles, playground equipment? They can be cleaned throughout the day but not after every child. What is the best course of action? If we have limited numbers in each day e.g. different classes each day or part of the week, what about

the key worker children who are in every day? As more places reopen there will be more key worker children who will need to be in everyday. How can we ensure social distancing but provide enough places for everyone?

If teachers are in everyday teaching what about those children whose parents want to keep them at home? Are teachers expected to teach in school and provide home learning? What about teachers with young children whose nurseries have closed? Will we be forced to 'chase' parents for attendance when they feel their child is safer at home?

Equally there are questions about how can we best support children who will find it really hard to return to school, having been apart from their friends and teachers for so long? How can we support children who may be really anxious about coming back to school when the virus is still out there?

These are just a few of the questions that we are hoping will be answered. I am sharing them with you so you are aware of just some of the things being discussed behind the scenes. I want you to know we are doing everything possible to make sure school is the safe place it should be for the community. We were told we suddenly had to partially close, without any guidance. I do not want to be told to suddenly reopen without any guidance. These questions don't mean we don't want to reopen but just that we want everyone to be as safe as possible. When this is over I want the same number of children, families and staff safe and well as I had before lock down.

With my very best wishes

Nicky