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May 15th 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As a natural follow up from my letter earlier this week and having given you time to respond to the information within it, I wanted to answer some of the questions that you have been asking (or perhaps been thinking) as best I can.

1) Is the 1st of June a definite opening day for children in nursery, reception, Y1 and Y6?

No. It is dependent on conditions set by the government being met. We have been asked to prepare in case those conditions are met. We don't know when, or if, that date will be confirmed.

2) Why have these specific year groups been chosen above others?

The rate of infection remains too high to allow the full opening of schools for all pupils yet. There are key reasons why nurseries, Reception, Year 1, Year 6, are being prioritised.

- The value that face to face interaction with teachers and education staff provides for young people:
- Children in Reception and Year 1 are at the very beginning of their school career and are mastering the essential basics, including counting and the fundamentals of reading and writing, and learning to socialise with their peers.
- Year 6 children are finishing Key Stage 2 and are preparing for the transition to secondary school, and will benefit immensely from time with their friends and teachers to ensure they are ready.

3) Has the government released any information about how schools are supposed to keep children safe?

Yes – you can read it here:

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

- 4) I don't want my child to come back to school yet as I don't feel it is safe. What will happen if I don't send them?

There will be no action taken. I very much understand that you have individual concerns at this time.

- 5) Can you guarantee that my child will be kept 2m apart from other children?

It has been acknowledged that unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2m apart from each other and staff. Taking this into account, our planning includes splitting classes, having defined areas that each group uses, a tray of equipment for each child, staggered starts and ends of the day, staggered breaks and lunch times, frequent opportunities to wash hands with soap and water, and additional cleaning of hard surfaces. This is all part of the government guidance. However, I cannot guarantee that children (in particular, those in nursery, reception and Y1) will fully understand being able to stay 2m apart.

- 6) I have children in different year groups. Can siblings of eligible children attend school?

Sadly not. Only children in nursery, reception, Y1 and Y6 are potentially going to be able to come to school.

- 7) If we come back on June 1st will my child be taught by their usual teacher in their usual classroom?

It is our intention to make the return to school as 'familiar' as possible but the guidance is very clear in this regard and it is impossible to do this for all children. Those in nursery will be divided into small groups and will be with one named member of staff, all day, in specific areas. All toys and equipment which cannot be washed or cleaned each day e.g. soft toys, will be put away. Children in YR, Y1 and Y6 will be split into smaller groups of no more than 15 and taught in defined spaces (not necessarily their own classrooms) by the same staff, each day. Those teaching them will not necessarily be their usual class teacher/teaching assistant as classes will be split, some staff are shielding and some are clinically vulnerable and will not be in work.

- 8) What will the start and end of the day look like?

Our plans are developing and include year groups being allocated staggered start and end of day times as well as specific entrances to use. In line with guidance, only one parent should accompany children and parents will not be allowed on site other than in an emergency. Members of staff will be at each gate to enable messages to be passed to class teachers.

- 9) Will you continue with home learning via the website for children not in school?

Yes. Feedback on this has been positive and children have engaged with it.

10) Will you run breakfast and after school clubs?

Not at the moment. This would mean different staff and different children mixing. We have been advised that groups should be consistent, use the same spaces and work with the same adults. This would be impossible in breakfast and after school clubs.

11) What will my child be taught if they come back to school?

These plans are developing. There will be a focus on well-being as well as the basics of reading, writing and maths.

12) I am a keyworker and my child has been attending the childcare provision put on by the school since March. However, my child is not in nursery, Reception, Y1 or Y6 – will this provision continue?

Yes. However, the location will now move to the Clee View site (in the Y3/4 area). The process of booking this provision will continue as it has done so up to this point. Further details will be forthcoming in terms of drop off and pick up protocols.

I hope that the information above answers some of your questions. I know there are lots more and, as we move forward, I will keep sharing the information that I have with you. The fact that information changes, sometimes daily, is difficult but by keeping in touch we can make safe, considered decisions. Please do ring school or email if you would like to talk to us on an individual basis and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Kinds regards,

Kate Mather