

Tuesday 19th May 2020

Dear Parent

I hope this letter finds you and your family safe and well.

You will no doubt have seen and read much about the Government's plans for schools to welcome back more children from 1st June. The most recent advice, supported by the Government's Chief Scientific Officer, is that it is safe for schools to start planning to welcome more children in a very controlled way. The implementation of this controlled reopening to more children is subject to the meeting of the five tests outlined below.



Five tests for adjusting the lockdown

- 1** ➤ The NHS has sufficient capacity to provide critical care and specialist treatment right across the UK
- 2** ➤ A sustained and consistent fall in daily deaths from Coronavirus
- 3** ➤ Reliable data to show that the rate of infection is decreasing to manageable levels across the board
- 4** ➤ Operational challenges including testing and PPE are in hand with supply able to meet future demand
- 5** ➤ Confident that any adjustments to the current measures will not risk a second peak of infections that overwhelms the NHS

Details of the Government's plans can be found in a parent guide accessed via;

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

As a Federation, we understand our responsibilities for the health and wellbeing of children, their families and our staff team. We will only welcome more children back when we feel it is safe to do so with June 1st being a start date not a deadline. As parents would rightly expect we will continue to listen to the advice from the Government and the leading scientists prior to June 1st and update our plans if advice changes.

As stated in my letter on Friday we are making good progress with our plans and believe we are in a strong position. Our plans include a detailed risk assessment that is based on all the national advice regarding social distancing, group sizes, keeping groups in isolation, hygiene requirements etc. The guidance tells schools and parents that by following the detailed guidance we can reduce risk. This can never mean 'risk free'. There will always be risk just as there is a risk from going to the shops or carrying on any activity beyond the home. However, we are also fully aware of the risks of children not accessing the educational and social opportunities provided by schools.

In order that our plans gain the confidence of staff and parents it is important they receive the oversight and scrutiny of the full governing board. A meeting of the board has been planned for the start of next week and therefore it will be the middle of next week before I can provide parents with the full details of how each school will implement the expectations set out by the Government.

I fully understand parents will be keen to receive details of our plans. It is also important that these plans are robust and have had appropriate scrutiny and review.

In the meantime, I am happy to provide information regarding two key areas should the five tests be met and the Government therefore give the go ahead for schools to welcome more children from the 1st June. I hope by giving advanced notice of these aspects it will assist families with their plans.

Extra-Curricular Clubs and Before/After School Care

In relation to extra-curricular clubs and before/after school care the guidance states schools should -

'Only run such provision if you are able to keep children within the groups they are in during the day or safely distanced.'

'Keep cohorts together: ensure that children and young people are in the same small groups at all times each day, and different groups are not mixed during the day, or on subsequent days.'

Preparing for the wider opening of schools from 1st June Planning Guide for Primary Schools

After careful consideration it has been agreed with our staff team and before/after school provider there is no way of meeting the expectations of either keeping children within the groups they are with during the day or safely distancing multiple groups in a single space that has not been used by other groups during the day.

As a result, in the initial phase of the wider opening we are unable to offer extra-curricular clubs or before/after school provision. As a parent myself I fully recognise the inconvenience this causes to families however it is essential that schools follow the guidance. This situation will be kept under review in line with any amendments to guidance on how schools should operate.

As stated by the Prime Minister;

"If people don't have access to childcare then I think it's fair to regard that as an obvious barrier to their ability to go back to work."

Boris Johnson

Transport of Reception Children from Follifoot to Spofforth

As outlined in the guidance;

'Keep cohorts together: ensure that children and young people are in the same small groups at all times each day, and different groups are not mixed during the day, or on subsequent days.'

Preparing for the wider opening of schools from 1st June Planning Guide for Primary Schools

It would be outside the guidance to put children from different groups on the same transport. As a result, we will not be able to offer the bus service to transport children in Reception at Follifoot to Spofforth for the initial phase of return. We appreciate this may cause some inconvenience however I am sure you can understand the importance of schools operating within the guidance in order parents feel confident in our ability to keep children and staff safe.

If this causes a significant issue for families please get in touch and we can discuss how we might be able to assist for example with an earlier drop off for one child where families have children attending both schools.

We await further clarification from North Yorkshire in relation to the children who have a statutory entitlement to school transport. We will update you further when we have more information on this.

It is important to emphasise that plans may change. Schools receive new and updated guidance almost daily. In the meantime please be reassured we are planning to the best of our ability with the most current information so we can do the very best job for children and their families.

Many thanks for taking the time to read yet another communication.

Yours sincerely

Mr Paul Griffiths – Headteacher