

Dear Parent

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

Welcoming more children into school.

You will no doubt be aware that on Sunday the government asked schools to prepare to start to welcome back more children from Monday 1st June. Since this announcement, the government has released a number of guidance documents in relation to its plans including one specifically aimed at parents. This can be accessed at;

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

We recommend parents read this as it explains the rationale behind the plans and answers many of the questions parents may have including; does my child have to attend?

During the week we have made good progress working through the complex issues involved in preparing for this next change, considering carefully how this can be done safely and with due regard to the health and well-being of children, their families and staff. This is a delicate balancing act meeting the sometimes conflicting demands and concerns of the government, children, parents, staff and the community. I am immensely grateful to the staff team who have spent many hours working through these plans with me.

We have considered carefully how we will implement the current guidance for the children returning to school and support children not yet returning. This is complex, as the expectation is that schools will facilitate children learning and socialising in isolated groups of no more than fifteen children. Meeting this expectation will require virtually every single member of staff to be deployed in school while children from four other year groups remain at home.

We would like to reassure parents we are fully committed to ensuring we provide for all children throughout this time, which is why we are taking our time to develop the very best plan we can. We are committed to ensuring our plans gain the confidence of the families who have children returning to school while also reassuring those not yet returning we will continue to support learning at home. This support however will have to be different to as it is now.

I fully understand parents will be keen to receive details of our plans. I will write next week with full details, which will reflect the most current guidance while also acknowledging that the government is releasing and amending guidance on a daily basis.

While we complete our plans I would like to answer the two most common questions I have been asked this week, which are;

How will you ensure children are kept 2m apart? And Will children and staff wear facemasks?

In answer to these would direct you the most current government guidance, which states;

'We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to early years and schools, we are taking this into account.'

Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings

'Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended. Schools and other education or childcare settings should therefore not require staff, children and learners to wear face coverings.'

Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings

Essential Worker Half Term (26th -29th May) Provision

Because of the dedication of our fantastic team, we are able to offer provision during the holidays for children of essential critical workers. This provision will be available from Tuesday 26th – Friday 29th May. Bank holiday provision can be arranged through the North Yorkshire Hub at Grove Road School Harrogate.

During half term we will be preparing and adapting the building for the return of more children after half term. This will involve a considerable amount of work so we ask parents to only use this provision as an absolute last resort.

If you have no other option than to use this provision during half term please contact admin@spofforth.n-yorks.sch.uk no later than 1.00pm Tuesday 19th May to book a place indicating the days and times needed.

And Finally...

Thank you to everyone for your support, kindness and generosity, which are becoming hallmarks of our national response to this crisis.

Yours sincerely

Mr Paul Griffiths – Headteacher