

All Saints' Catholic Primary School

Kitswell Road, Lanchester, Durham, DH7 0JG

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Head Teacher: Mrs. F. Stephenson Deputy Head Teacher: Mrs. A. Conlin

Chair of Governors: Mr. M. Quigley



Tuesday 9th June, 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope you and yours are well; it is becoming more apparent that many are experiencing difficulties at this time and I would like to reassure you that you are in our prayers and we are here to help so please do get in touch if you require any assistance. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the support you continue to show the school and for the kind messages that we have been receiving daily.

Following a full governing body meeting held at 4p.m. this evening, I would like to confirm the following decisions that the governors have approved:

Year Six pupils are able to return to school from Monday 15th June

Year One pupils are able to return to school from Monday 22nd June

Please can I remind you that attendance is not compulsory and if you choose to keep your child at home, fines will not be imposed.

Unfortunately, due to a number of circumstances unique to our school we are unable to welcome Reception children back before the summer holidays. Every school in the country is trying to accommodate the government's requests in a range of different circumstances. Our situation is based upon our school's context of:

Large numbers of key workers;

A small building with increasing pupil numbers;

One classroom per cohort which are different shapes and sizes;

A small staff;

Small shared spaces and a low number of toilets.

These factors are unique to our school, and the fact that the demand for key worker places is increasing, means we have had to make this very difficult decision.

I am aware that when we talk about capacity within school that it may not be clear to some what that means in reality. The photograph below shows our Year Four classroom. 'Normally' we could fit thirty pupils plus staff in this space whereas, under the new social distancing guidelines, we are able to fit eight pupils and two staff. It is upon these measurements that our risk assessment is based. We simply do not have the facilities to accommodate key worker demand and fit in three year groups.



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Every single person on our school staff wish we were welcoming all pupils back to complete the academic year; we know that you are also looking forward to the day when children can return together. We know that home schooling for many has been difficult. It is very hard not to compare with what other families are doing or what you know the children would have been covering in class. I would like to reassure you when the children return to school formally, it will be the teachers' job to meet them where they are academically, socially and emotionally and help to guide them towards where they should be.

We cannot talk in detail about the return to school for all pupils because we simply do not know how that will look. What I can tell you is that the curriculum will be tailored for each cohort, focusing primarily upon mental health and wellbeing followed up with the foundations of education: phonics, reading, writing, maths and religious education. The staff will work tirelessly to ensure all children are able to make progress and reach their potential from their current position. Consolidation and clear outcomes will be the key.

If you are a key worker, or a parent of a Year Six or Year One pupil, I trust that you are making the decision on whether to send your child back to school or not based upon what you believe to be the best for your child and family. Whatever decision you make, we will be here to support you. For the parents of all other pupils, we know you are trying your best with home schooling and we know that looks different in every household; please do not be too hard on yourself.

Kind regards,

Mrs. F. Stephenson

