



Smithy Street Primary School

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13th May 2020

Dear parents and carers,

I hope that you, your children and extended families are keeping well during the continuing lockdown. Furthermore, I trust that you have heard the announcement made by the Prime Minister on Sunday evening or you will have heard about the content through social media and the press.

In essence, what the Prime Minister has said is that the government would like it if schools could open to increasing numbers of children from 01 June 2020. The final decision will be based on a number of factors based on whether it will be safe to do so, depending on the control of the spread of the corona virus.

The government would like us to open gradually, starting with the children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. Yesterday the government indicated that they would like to see all primary school year groups back in school for at least a month before the end of the school year. It is our understanding that not all children need to be back full time, but instead will take it in turns to attend in small groups with up to 15 children maximum.

The Government have also made it clear that families who choose not to send their children back in to school will not be fined for non-attendance for the rest of this calendar year. I know from our phone calls home, that some of you are quite worried about this, and I want you to know that sending your child back remains your choice in almost all cases.

For Smithy Street this means that we will begin to consult staff ,unions and other schools, including Redlands, to assess how and when we will open, in order to make it as safe as possible.

We are very unlikely to open to all of the suggested year groups all at the same time, because we want to make sure we can open safely. It is likely that children who return will do so on a part-time basis. We also need to undertake a detailed risk assessment, informed by all the guidance that the DFE have given us. I will be in the position to share this risk assessment with you all before we re-open, so you know what we have planned to reduce the risk of catching the virus. It is very unlikely that we will have any breakfast or after school clubs, including childcare clubs when we re-open, this will be for the foreseeable future. Parents may also need to drop their children off and pick their children up at different/ staggered times. We are working on a 'family list' to make this as convenient as possible to families who have children in multiple year groups.

When we know which classes we can allow to return, we will phone parents to ask them if they intend to take up the place, so we can plan safe staffing levels .Please rest assured that we will not start to re-open to more children until we are sure that we have the right systems in place and we can do it in a way that is safe for your children and our staff.

We will also do our best to continue to provide work for children who work at home.

I will be writing to you again next week with a further update, as soon as our plans are a bit more worked out.

Stay safe and best wishes to all of you,

Edith Philipsen

Headteacher

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