11th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,
**Coronavirus – Covid 19 Update**

I hope this letter finds you all safe and well? We are very grateful for your continuing understanding and patience as we come to terms with life in these uncertain times.

As you may have watched the Prime Minister’s address to the nation last night, like us, you may be confused as to where exactly that leaves schools?

Ultimately we can only do what we believe to be in the best interests of your children and our staff and that comes down to a judgement of risk rather than any absolute right or wrong decisions.

We have to balance the following factors in reaching a decision on whether or not school is a safe environment for our **all of children and staff**, not just Reception, Year 1 and Year 6.

* Is your child shielding or anyone else in the family shielding?
* Can we socially distance from children and staff?
* Do we have enough space to do so?
* Can staff travel safely to and from work?
* Can the children be safely transported to school?
* Can they socially distance in transport?
* Will the nursing and therapy support be in school?
* Will they be ‘hands on’ with your children?
* Will suitably trained staff be available to support individual children?
* Will staff have access to testing?
* Will we have sufficient staff to run a safe school day?
* Do we have appropriate PPE resources for staff?
* Are your children free from the virus? How do we know? Have they been tested?
* Are you able to take their temperature before they get onto transport?
* Can levels of hygiene be maintained with higher numbers of pupils accessing the building?

Obviously we are risk assessing these issues and more. The Government’s advice regarding Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children returning to school after June 1st remains vague and we are awaiting more specific guidance for specialist schools to arrive this week.

However, to help our planning we would like an idea of which children **you may like us** to consider returning to school before the summer. You can do this via email, or phone calls or post if you wish to send your views in to school.

We have been asked to seek parents and your children’s views on whether or not you wish your child to be back in school. This is **ALL of our pupils**, not just Reception, Year 1 & Year 6.

It would be very helpful if you could include in your answer your reasons for your decision to keep your child safe at home or for requiring support from school.

It would also be very helpful if you could indicate if you are willing, or prefer to transport your child to school and if you want this daily or on a part-time basis?

We appreciate there are many more unanswered questions but a quick response would be very helpful in supporting our planning.

Your child’s Class Teacher will be following up this letter and your responses if we don’t hear from you soon.

For the majority of families the advice from the Government **remains** to keep your child safe at home if you are able to do so. School is partially open to a small number of children on Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays. This is for children whose parents are Key Workers or who are particularly vulnerable. We have risk assessed the whole school population and are in regular discussions with partners in Health, Social Care and the Local Authority to respond flexibly to those of you in greatest need**. It is still our judgement** that the **vast majority of children are safer in their home**environment as we cannot socially distance in school and obviously need to be in physical contact with your children. This then puts our staff at risk of exposure to the virus, and whilst they are happy to do so I want to minimise this risk to the lowest degree possible.

As you will know, we are keeping in weekly contact with all of our families and are responding to your concerns on a daily basis. We strongly encourage you all to join the Class Dojo where possible and to make a real effort to answer our calls or get back to us quickly if we have left messages for you.

We will keep posting updates via Facebook and our home to school messaging service and the school website. Can you ensure that we have your latest phone number and can we encourage you to use our Facebook page to share your ideas and support each other at this difficult time.

If you are feeling anxious and would like to talk to one of the Leadership Team we are still here in school for you between 9:00am-3:00pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and available by email at any time. There are emergency contact numbers on our answering machine if necessary.

We all send our love and best wishes and hope that we all come out the other side fit, healthy and well.

Take care,

Chris Rollings
Head Teacher