

Monday 18 May, 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you to all of you who have completed the survey regarding the possible re-opening of schools for Reception, Years 1 and 6 children. Thank you to all of you who have responded separately with your thoughts and comments; it has been really helpful as we continue our planning and risk assessments, although unfortunately we do not have the time to respond to you individually.

As expected, the announcement by the Government last Sunday- and then again on Monday- has raised many questions and concerns for myself, my staff, parents and children, given that how we can welcome whole year groups of children back into school **safely**, is at the forefront of our minds.

We all would wish to get the children back into education as soon as the scientific advice assures us that it would be safe, but I have to be honest and say that opening the school to such a large number of children at this time will not be easy nor without risk; not least because as we can all acknowledge, it is impossible to social distance at school all of the time. We will of course follow all guidelines and design the day to reduce and minimise the risks as much as we can, but the risks will still be there.

The Leadership Team have been considering a range of models, since last week's announcement. No two schools are the same as it depends on the size of classrooms and also how many staff one has available. We do have staff who are shielding and this means that your child may not see their current teacher at all. We also have staff with young children who do not have available childcare so there is lots to consider. At St. Matthew's we do not feel that a class of 15 pupils is safe for our school and so plan to create smaller 'bubbles.' This means that it may not be possible to welcome back all pupil groups in the way that the Government describes.

It is for this reason we need to have an idea of numbers so we can start the planning and logistics of our 'bubbles' and organise the staggered day for safe drop off and collection.

As you are aware, we are currently open only to priority groups. We are aware that your circumstances may now have changed following the announcement from the Government that some industries are now allowed to open and employees are being encouraged to return to work. We are in the process of reviewing the number of children in this group coming to school and how many we may be able to accommodate. **We are not able to offer breakfast and/or after school provision for anyone other than a key worker child. If you are a keyworker and you require breakfast and/ or after school club provision, please be aware that your child will remain with the key worker group and will not mix with their year group at all (potentially Year R, 1 & 6).**

Please complete google form below if you are a key worker as soon as possible – but no later than 12 noon tomorrow (19.05.2020)

We shall require a letter from your employer stating that your role is crucial to the Covid-19 response.

<https://forms.gle/tLxmMCD4ZLuTwsMP6>

We will not be continuing with our programme of Remote Google Classroom for any year group that has been invited back to school as we simply will not have the capacity.

We realise that there is an awful lot of work and planning to do before we are in the position to safely welcome children back to school. However, we will do all that we can to make sure we will be ready to start phasing in the return to school for some year groups in the first week of June.

We plan to use the first two days of June as further planning time and will contact parents and carers on Monday 1st June as to our plans for Wednesday 3rd June. **Plans are always subject to change at very short notice.**

For your information, we attach our protective measures risk assessment for our school.

With my best wishes,

Miss P. Dryden