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***'Placing learning at the heart of everything we do'***

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**Re: Possibly Phased Opening to EYFS, Year 1 and Year 6 children**

Dear Parents & Carers,

As I am sure you will appreciate, we are currently dealing with a complex and rapidly changing situation. My priority will always be the health and safety of the pupils and staff in our school and now more than ever, this remains our primary focus. I know you've seen in the news that schools may reopen on 1<sup>st</sup> June to EYFS, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils **if** the government thinks it's safe. I can appreciate that many of you have feelings of apprehension, worry and possibly are fearful. All these feelings are very normal during this current climate and you are by no means alone in having those feelings.

We at school, have now been tasked with starting to think about how we will approach reopening after the coronavirus pandemic. Getting to grips with the coronavirus pandemic and what we should be doing to mitigate the risk of spreading infection in a school environment, as you can imagine, will prove an extremely difficult and most probably an impossible task. By increasing groups of people, be they children or adults, this then increases the number of variables that no one person or organisation can control and obviously increases the risk of working with those who may have been exposed to the virus. To help us all remain safe and continue to provide an education for our children, we will continue to assess any potential risks that should be mitigated before reopening, such as risk of infection or unsafe premises.

It is an extremely unsettling time for us all, but rest assured that we are going to be doing everything we can to make sure we're ready to receive some of the children from these year groups **when** it's safe for our school to reopen in the coming weeks. **However, there will be no pressure from the school to send your child in, we recognise that in this current uncertain situation we all find ourselves in, you know your children and personal situation best.** We will keep you updated with all our preparations for making sure the school is as safe as possible, so you can make an informed decision.

Our current thinking, although we are still awaiting further detailed guidance from the DfE and the Local Authority, is working around a phased plan:

**Phase 1: prioritised key worker children, vulnerable groups.**

This is currently in operation and has been working well. This provision will continue in exactly the same format for those children eligible throughout any phased school reopening process using the same booking system as you've all now become accustomed to.

**Phase 2: extended provision for children registered in March as Key worker children/ vulnerable/ ECHP groups.**

This stage will see those parents who registered as key workers at the beginning of lockdown will be contacted to ascertain their current situation and possible forthcoming needs.

**All other phases of our plan will be communicated as soon as it is safe to do so.**

**Phase 3: Children in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 6.**

This phase will only be put into operation when the Government's 5 measure/criteria are completely met, the Teaching Unions are satisfied with the information provided by the Government and the school is certain it can safely extend opening further. (This will happen on 1<sup>st</sup> June at the earliest)

One of the main issues around the reopening of the school to larger numbers of pupils remains around managing social distancing. When reviewing the possible numbers of pupil's, the school might need to accommodate as part of Phase 3, it could be up to 130 pupils. As I'm sure you can appreciate this number of what would be predominantly young children who are likely to have no real concept of keeping their distance, means that any phased return to school would look very different to what they might be expecting to return to, with many of the resources they have become accustomed to using at school, now being inaccessible for hygiene and transmission reasons. The table below reflects what Phase 3 might look like in practice.

| <b>At Priestley Primary School:</b>  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Plan of action</b>  | <b>Reasons</b>   |
| <b>1.</b> We could be offering morning and afternoon sessions on a rotation system.    | Your child will not be in school all day every day as under current guidance we cannot safely offer this.                              |
| <b>2.</b> We could be phasing in just one year group at a time.                        | Your child will not be in school all day every day as under current guidance we cannot safely offer this.                              |
| <b>3.</b> We could also be offering a split week to different groups.                  | Your child will not be in school all day every day as under current guidance we cannot safely offer this.                              |
| <b>4.</b> Groups will have staggered start & finish times.                             | To avoid large group gatherings.   |
| <b>5.</b> We will be working in small groups.  | To try to follow social distancing guidelines as best we can and reduce the number of people your child might come in to contact with. |
| <b>6.</b> The children will not all be taught by their class teacher.                  | Due to having to split classes into multiple smaller groups.   |
| <b>7.</b> The children will not see all their classmates.                              | Due to social distancing & safety.   |
| <b>8.</b> Different year groups will have different amounts of time in school.         | This is due to each year group having different needs.   |
| <b>9.</b> All children whether in school or at home will continue to work on the HLPs. | As we will be working in rotations and in small groups across the week.  |
| <b>10.</b> We will be keeping Key Worker/Vulnerable children in separate groupings.    | To try to limit the number of children mixing throughout the day- cross contamination  |
| <b>11.</b> Entrance into the school building will be for school staff only.            | To adhere to strict social distancing guidelines; we cannot allow additional adults into the building at any time.                     |

The school's intention is to open to meet this challenge, as long as we have sufficient staffing & clear guidance to do so safely.

**However, I reiterate again it will be your choice as a parent/carer as to whether your child returns to school this side of the summer holiday. There will be no pressure from the school for your child to return and there will be no 'Attendance Fines' levied for those who decide that it's currently safer to keep your child at home.**

In order that we can start to fully prepare for a possible Phase 3 opening on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> June, I would ask that you please complete the attached form to register your child for School Provision. In doing this, it will enable us to ascertain how many of the possible 130 pupils we will need to accommodate. Please return the information below to [ask@priestley.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:ask@priestley.wilts.sch.uk) by Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May at the latest. I ask that this is done as soon as you feel able before the 20<sup>th</sup> May so as to allow the school time to put in place a course of action that will be best suited to trying to keep your children and the adult community, both at home and at school safe.

In the meantime, the school is still open **only** for vulnerable pupils and the children of Key workers. We understand that some employers will be encouraging you to return to work, but we are not in a position right now to extend places to other children until we receive further government guidance.

While I appreciate that there will be a wide range of different views about how we should be responding and what action we should take, I hope you will appreciate the complexities involved, not least that Reception and Year One children will inevitably be the hardest group to socially distance. I will continue to provide further information as soon as I am able to do so.

Again, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continuous support.

Keep safe and well.

*Mr Marsh-Ballard*

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**Re: Possibly Phased Opening to EYFS, Year 1 and Year 6 children**

| Possible School Provision after 1 <sup>st</sup> June  |          |         |          |         |
|---|----------|---------|----------|---------|
| I would like to register my intention to send my child to back to school on the 1 <sup>st</sup> June. |          |         |          |         |
| Reception, Year One or Year Six Pupil   |          |         |          |         |
| Child's Name:   |          |         |          |         |
| Year Group:   | EYFS     | EYFS    | Year 1   | Year 6  |
| Class:  | Duckling | Gosling | Puffling | Mallard |
| Please tick:  |          |         |          |         |