



'Believe you can'

15th May 2020

Re: The Government's announcement regarding the proposed return of pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from 1st June

Dear Parents and Carers,

Further to the letter I sent to you earlier in the week about the Government's proposed reopening of schools to pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from 1st June, please find below some further information. Please note, we are also emailing the link to a survey for the parents **of these year groups only**. The survey results will help us when planning a safe return for our pupils.

Whilst as a school we recognise the importance of our pupils returning to school at the earliest opportunity possible, the safety and wellbeing of your children and our staff **must** take the utmost priority when planning for the potential return to school of large groups of pupils.

We agree with the sentiment of the Government's Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson, who has written an opinion piece today, stating *"It is time to start bringing some of our children back in the interests of their welfare and education. But this will be done carefully so it's right for our children, right for your family and those who work in schools and right for our communities."*

As a school that has suffered the sad loss of a parent to coronavirus, I feel it would be remiss of us to ignore the fact that our school serves a largely black and minority ethnic (BAME) community, comprising of both staff and children (families). It is well documented that the coronavirus has adversely affected this section of the community more than any other - in which case we must be alert to the risks posed by the virus to the community at large AND the greater population of people that form our school community.

Although the Government is encouraging a return to school for the year groups mentioned above from 1st June (if possible), they have also stated an ambition for all pupils to return before the summer, as and when it becomes safe to do so. This means that the proposed return of pupils must take into account the fact that the actual numbers of pupils attending may increase to include all year groups. This poses an even greater challenge to the school's ability to safely maintain the social distancing measures that have been enforced until this point. Suffice to say, the Government has also stated that parents **will not** be penalised if they choose **not** to send their children back to school before the summer break.

Despite the uncertainty of the situation - of which the Government is updating its guidance daily - we will continue to provide online learning opportunities for our pupils through our

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excellent home-learning arrangement to ensure their continued learning throughout the remainder of the summer term.

I have attached some information that relates to people who may be considered vulnerable in light of the Government's definition along with the updated advice for such groups. For members of the community that do not fit into this category, the general advice re protective measures **still** applies.

Please note, the survey for the parents of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 will close at 10am on Tuesday 19th May. Please ensure you have completed it before then. As the survey asks you for information about children's clinical vulnerability, please refer to the definitions of vulnerability when completing the survey.

We will continue to provide further updates as we receive them from the Government. Please continue to refer to the links on our website for the most up to date guidance about coronavirus.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. H. Asghar
Principal

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Definitions of 'vulnerability'

• **Vulnerable people (non-clinical)**

This includes those who are 'vulnerable' due to non-clinical factors, such as children at risk of violence or with special education needs and / or victims of domestic abuse.

• **Clinically vulnerable people**

People considered to be at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. People in this category are advised to stay at home as much as possible. If they do go out, they must take particular care to minimise contact with others outside their household. These people include those who:

- Are aged 70 or older
- Are pregnant
- Have a lung disease that's not severe (such as asthma, COPD, emphysema or bronchitis)
- Have heart disease (such as heart failure)
- Have diabetes
- Have chronic kidney disease
- Have liver disease (such as hepatitis)
- Have a condition affecting the brain or nerves (such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis or cerebral palsy)
- Have a condition that means they have a high risk of getting infections
- Are taking medicine that can affect the immune system (such as low doses of steroids)
- Are very obese (a BMI of 40 or above).

• **Clinically extremely vulnerable people**

People defined on medical grounds as clinically extremely vulnerable are at the greatest risk of severe illness. Persons in this category are to follow the Government's 'shielding' guidance by staying at home at all times and avoiding all non-essential face-to-face contact. These people are described as being extremely clinically vulnerable and include those who:

- have had a solid organ transplant – kidney, liver, pancreas, heart, or lung
- are having treatments for some cancers
- have severe long-term lung disease including cystic fibrosis and severe asthma
- have rare diseases and inborn errors of metabolism that increase their risk of infection
- are on medication that compromises their immune system and so are much more likely to get infections and become seriously unwell from them
- are pregnant with significant heart disease.

If you have any concerns about your child's health or vulnerability due to coronavirus, please liaise with your doctor in the first instance and then get in touch with our school office to share your concerns.

For the latest guidance about coronavirus please go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

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