

18<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents

I am writing to bring you up to date with our plan for the phased return of children to school.

You will probably be aware that on 9<sup>th</sup> June, the Secretary of State for Education acknowledged that the Government's original intention that all primary children return to school for a month before the end of term would be unachievable. The stipulation that children must be segregated in "bubbles" of no more than fifteen remains firmly in place as well as a 2 metre social distancing rule. This inevitably limits the number of children that most schools can accommodate, given their resources of space and staff. The Secretary of State asked schools nevertheless to explore how they could still bring back more children this term, particularly those in Year 6, Year 1 and Reception.

We were delighted to welcome back 48 Year 6 children last week, 39 Year 1 children this week and of course we continue to provide support for as many key worker families as we can (currently 36 children) as we have done since 23<sup>rd</sup> March. During the preceding weeks, we prepared detailed risk assessments (which you can find on our website <http://www.st-monicas.enfield.sch.uk/our-school/policies/>) and undertook a complete redesign and reorganisation of our classrooms and other learning spaces. This involved emptying classrooms of furniture to enable social distancing, sectioning off playground equipment and outdoor spaces, the installation of sanitising stations and the acquisition of sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff. Revised timetables have been drawn up to ensure that one teacher and one teaching assistant/NNEB are allocated to each of the "bubbles" and every available indoor and outdoor space is being used. Thanks to the thoroughness with which those preparations have been made by our staff and the cooperation of children and parents, the return of Year 6 and Year 1 has gone smoothly.

I am now looking to provide some provision for our Reception children. I would like this to begin on the week beginning Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June. All our Reception staff are currently engaged in leading "bubbles" elsewhere and so the staffing arrangements have not yet been agreed. I am currently seeking a suitable supply teacher who could pair up with known support staff. The available spaces are class 1Y and the Sparkles room and so the children will not be in their usual classroom. We are therefore limited in terms of being able to offer much more than one or two days per week to these children. I will be writing separately to Reception parents about this.

I am currently investigating a provisional plan for all children in every year group to return at some point during the week beginning 13<sup>th</sup> July. However, this is entirely dependent upon a relaxation of the social distancing measures. The government is due to make an announcement about this on 4<sup>th</sup> July. As there are many factors to take into account, I am not able to provide any further detail just yet. I fully understand that this situation remains far from ideal. I recognise how much pressure you are all under and the frustration and anxiety caused by the continuing uncertainty. I do not believe it would be honest or helpful to make commitments which depend on factors outside the school's control. I hope however, that you will accept that we are doing as much as we can, as fast as we can, to accommodate more children.

I shall be in touch again as soon as there are further developments, including advice from the DfE on whether and how a full reopening of schools in September will proceed.

Finally I want to say thank you for your support over the past months. It has made a very difficult situation much more manageable. If there is anything else I can help you with at this stage then please feel free to contact me at school via [headteacher@st-monicas.enfield.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@st-monicas.enfield.sch.uk)

Kind regards, Kate Baptiste, Headteacher