

Whitnash Primary School

'Learning, growing and succeeding together'

Headteacher
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Dear Parents /Carers

As you are all aware, schools have been requested to make plans for a **possible**, wider re-opening from 1st June 2020. This reopening has been advised for some year groups. Year 1, 6 and Reception have only been identified at this stage.

It is important to remember that there are a number of tests that must be satisfied ahead of more pupils attending from this date. The government is not due to fully confirm the reopening and phased return of school until **Thursday 28th May**.

The decision around how and when to reopen to more pupils is an operational one which sits with head teachers and school governors. All our plans have therefore been created in close consultation with our governing body.

Plans have been written after very careful consideration of the following:

- Safety of staff and pupils
- Staff and pupil mental health and well-being
- Government Guidance
- Union Advice
- LA advice
- Contracts and working patterns
- Workload

The aim of our school plans are:

- To ensure that temporary arrangements to re- introduce children to school focus on what is in the **best interests** of children's welfare and promote appropriate learning opportunities
- To ensure the **safest possible working practices for both pupils and employees**
- To **reduce risk to pupils and teachers' health and well- being throughout the time they are on the school site.**
- To ensure government guidance is **followed correctly and risks are assessed** in the context of **our school site.**

We have devised a plan that we believe minimises risks wherever possible and supports our staff, children and families. We have planned in a way that we feel best meets children's needs in these challenging circumstances. We believe the arrangements that we have planned have put the best interests of our pupils and staff at the forefront of the decision making. Child and staff well-being and safety is paramount and whilst we **cannot eradicate** all risks, we aim to minimise them.

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A detailed 'Phased Return Arrangements for Parents Handbook' has been created to accompany this correspondence. The aim of this document is to support parents in understanding the schools' rationale for these decisions. This document will be attached to the email with this letter for Reception, Year 6 and Year 1 pupils only. For all other year groups, it is available on the school website.

Our school Risk Assessment and plans need acceptance from the Local Authority. Confirmation of this acceptance will not be provided to school until after 26th May 2020. Therefore, whilst we are providing you with detail of our plans now, we cannot guarantee, nor do we have certainty, that we will be able to proceed or that there will not be some amendments. However, as we feel that it is important that parents have the earliest visibility of any likely plan, so that they can begin to make more informed choices about their children's possible return to school.

Therefore, once a decision is made at national level, and the Local Authority confirms acceptance, the phased return to school at Whitnash Primary will initially be as follows:

Year Groups	Return Date	Arrangement
Year 6 All Pupils	Thursday 4 th June 2020	Monday – Thursday 9:15am– 3:15pm
		Friday 9:15 -12:15pm
Year 1 All Pupils Part-time/mornings only, Mon-Thurs	Wednesday 10 th June 2020	Monday – Thursday 8:45am – 11:45am
		Friday – by invite only for targeted learners.
Reception Part-time, pupils in either mornings or afternoons Mon - Thurs	Monday 15 th June 2020 at the earliest (TBC)	Some pupils: Monday – Thursday 9:00am – 11:30am
		Some pupils: Monday- Thursday 12:30pm – 3:00pm
		Friday – by invite only for targeted learners.

We are sending this booklet today to enable you time to digest the arrangements before children are asked to return.

Parents from each year group, starting with Year 6, will be sent an email and asked to indicate to the school whether or not their child will return to school. Only the email to Year 6 pupils will be sent initially. Parents of Year 6 pupils will be asked to return their response by **Monday 1st June 2020**. This will allow time for any last minute adjustments, arrangements and communication.

If you are a parent of a child in Year 1 or Reception, please refer to the 'Phased Return Arrangements for Parents Handbook' for details of when you should expect to receive a similar email to express your response.

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We all recognise that returning to school will be a wonderful relief for a number of people. The sign that 'normal life' may be around the corner is exciting for everyone. We hope that the impact of reopening will be a positive one for the children who attend.

Recognising that initially, the stress associated with this will affect a considerable number of people is also clear. We aim to balance our arrangements to suit everyone, with varying views and vastly different concerns. It will, as you can appreciate, not be possible for everyone to have the return to school arrangement that they want.

We have planned in a way that can be scaled-up to other year groups if required. We are keen to minimise further disruption, e.g. moving children from room to room. Therefore, the part-time nature of some year groups return is due to the lack of space and the potential impact this will have on other year groups ability to return before the summer.

We believe these arrangements are as safe as possible under the circumstances.

We know many parents will want to know how social distancing measures are going to be observed and how the risk to staff/children would be reduced. For this reason, we have decided to share the plans clearly, so that everyone can make informed choices and understand how the system will work if it is deemed safe for a **phased** return from the 1st June. **These procedures will be constantly reviewed, taking into account any changes we feel necessary.**

The government has made it clear, that parents **will not** be penalised if they choose not to return their children to school during this period of uncertainty.

We thank you all for your continued support and understanding at this unprecedented time in all our lives.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Donna Ellison
Headteacher