



St Joseph's

Catholic Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you are keeping well and safe.

I am writing to you to keep you up to date with Government information regarding the possibility of schools opening to more pupils from June 1st 2020 at the earliest. The year groups for a phased return are; Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. The Government have provided this scientific evidence is the rationale for this decision:

- There is moderately high scientific confidence in evidence suggesting younger children are less likely to become unwell if infected with coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Because evidence shows the particularly detrimental impact which time spent out of education can have upon them. In addition, older children are more likely to have higher numbers of contacts outside of school so pose a greater transmission risk, and they are typically better able to learn at home.

Alongside the decision to begin to open schools to more children, the Government published detailed guidance to schools to support us in maintaining a safe environment for children and staff to learn in. This guidance is also based on the Government's scientific advice.

The Government acknowledges in the guidance that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. Schools are therefore working through the hierarchy of measures set out below:

- avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices
- regular cleaning of settings
- minimising contact and mixing

Alongside these measure the Government have stated that it is still important for reduced contact between people. The Government states that schools can achieve this and reduce transmission risk by following these guidelines:

- children, young people and staff, only to mix in small, consistent groups.
- Each small group stays away from other and groups and people.
- Public Health England (PHE) is also clear that if early years settings, schools and colleges do this, the risk of transmission will be lowered.

Our primary concern for all is safety and how we are able to manage a safe provision based on the government guidance. It is important to emphasise to you all that at this point we have not taken any decision to open to more children on a confirmed date.

We are currently looking at what a range of possibilities would look like and what we believe we could safely manage based on thorough COVID 19 risk assessments. As part of this process schools are beginning to seek views from parents in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 classes as to whether they would consider sending their children back to school. We do understand that parents will want more detailed information about the measures schools will be putting in place before they make a fully informed decision, but we are asking for an indication at this stage to aid our planning.

Any decision to open to more children will be based on safety, equality and equity and the need for a curriculum that supports the wellbeing of our children as well as ensuring quality learning opportunities. We will also use the emerging evidence and virus data to support any decisions taken.

Once we have completed the planning process, we will communicate our decision to you all and the plans that sit behind this.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

We thank you for your continued support and the updates on the work the children have done.

Kindest regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Lazell', written in a light grey or blue ink.

Lisa Lazell

Executive Headteacher