

Littledean Church of England Primary School

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Loving one another, building each other up

21st May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you for your responses to the survey that was sent out last week. Your responses have been considered carefully and have helped to inform the school's decisions.

The government has stipulated that the priority group for attendance at school must be those in the Key Worker or vulnerable group. If the number of children in this group increases then we may not be able to offer provision to all the other identified groups: Pre-School, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. This being the case it is important that everyone understands that any plans that have been made, may be subject to change.

Our planning has taken into account the fact that the government expects schools to take 15 children in each group, or 'bubble'. We are fortunate in that we have 15 children per year group, so for us, this is just about manageable with the space that we have available in the school. We have also had to take into account the fact that we are limited with the number of staff that we have available. We currently have 2 teachers who are shielding and 3 TAs, this obviously has a significant impact on the provision that we are able to offer.

At the moment, we are able to open to children in Pre-School, Reception, Year 1, Key Worker/Vulnerable and Year 6. However, if the number of Key Worker/Vulnerable children increases, we will need to decrease provision for other year groups to accommodate them – due to staffing and space restrictions.

I am not writing to install fear about school. I am writing to ensure that you have the full picture of what school will be like for your child from the 1st June, so that you can prepare them for the changes that we have made in order to keep them and school staff safe.

- We will be operating a staggered start and end to the school day – you will be informed which times apply to your child. Your child may need to go to a different door to normal and again you will be informed which door.
- There will be markings on the back playground to indicate where you will need to stand to pick up your child at the end of the day.
- Children will be kept within their 'bubble'/group for the whole of the school day. They will not mix with any other children or adults.
- Inside each classroom the tables have been arranged to allow 15 children to have a table each. There will be no carpet space available.

Head Teacher: Mrs Hayley McGoldrick

- The children will spend their school sessions in this room. There will be 2 adults in each classroom. Due to the number of staff shielding this may not be a class teacher or an adult that the child is already familiar with.
- Classrooms will have any soft furnishings (rugs, cushions, soft toys, tents etc...) removed; this is to limit the risk to children and adults.
- Each child will be given their own resource pack with pencils, colouring pens etc..., this is to minimise risk by sharing equipment.
- Resources and equipment are central to all we do in school. We have got to minimise the use of shared resources. We are still trying to determine the safest way to do this with toys and practical equipment in Pre-School, Reception and Year 1.
- The children will have designated toilets that they will use – these will be cleaned thoroughly halfway through the school day.
- Lunches will be in the form of packed lunches and will need to be eaten in the classrooms. Packed lunches will be provided for those children on Free School Meals and for any Reception and Year 1 children who require them under the Universal Free School Meal system.
- Lessons will not be delivered in the usual way. When the children return there will be a focus on integrating back into school life, supporting children's well-being and establishing our new rules and routines.
- Learning activities will continue to be made available on the school website.

We have put these measures into place following guidance from the government and the Local Authority. However, it is important to make clear that whilst we will do our absolute best to minimise risk and make school a safe place for all concerned – the very youngest children in the school will find it exceptionally difficult to social distance and we cannot guarantee that this will happen.

It is clear from the details that I have shared in this letter that the school will look very different for the foreseeable future. Sadly, it will also mean that the end of this academic year will look very different for our children. I am sure you can understand and appreciate that as much as we would like to take part in 'end of summer term activities', we won't be able to do this. For example, there will be no end of year performance, leavers service, prom, bowling trip, shirt signing or sports day. This is very sad for our Year 6 children and not the way that any of us would wish them to end their primary school journey. I can assure you, that as soon as we safely can, we will invite Year 6 children and their families back to school for something special to recognise the end of their primary school years.

I understand that the government will be making their final decision about whether to open schools on the 1st June towards the end of next week – this will not give us sufficient time to make sure that our plans are suitable for the number of children that we may have on site. This being the case we will be sending out another survey at the beginning of next week which will require a yes or no answer as to whether your child will be returning to school on 1st June. It is essential that we know in advance that your child will be attending so that we can ensure that we have the right provision in place.

The choice for your child to return to school is quite simply, your choice. Every child is different, every family is different and therefore what you decide to do may well be different to someone else. That is ok. As the Head Teacher of the school, I will respect your decision. The government guidance says:

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'We strongly encourage children and young people in the eligible year groups and priority groups (such as children of critical workers) to attend, as requested by their school or college, unless they are self-isolating or there are other reasons for absence (such as shielding due to health conditions). You should notify your child's school or college as normal if your child is unable to attend so that staff are aware and can discuss with you.

Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

I hope that this letter has helped to clarify what school will look like in June and the measures that we are putting in place to keep your child safe. School will look different, but it will still be filled with love and a team of people who want the best for your children.

It is so important that we all support each other at this time and respect that each one of us knows what is right for our own child. If you have any questions, please do contact me at the school and I will happily answer your questions.

Yours sincerely

Hayley McGoldrick