

Fox Wood School

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12 May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I write to you following the Prime Minister's announcement on Sunday evening. As I hope you will appreciate there have been many discussions and questions which have arisen from this. No plans or guidance from the Government was received by schools until late yesterday, and so we had not been able to consider or plan anything beforehand. The suggestion of reopening schools for certain Year Groups from 1st June is part of the government's conditional plan which it says will remain under regular review and which may happen, if it is deemed that this is safe. At the same time there is still the emphasis that pupils who are classified as vulnerable, or who have an EHCP, should be receiving support from school. It is our firm belief at this time that – where we can possibly support you in this remotely – this is the safest option for your children. However, we also understand how truly difficult this can be for some families, and we want you to all remember that we are here to support not judge.

We are waiting to receive more information from the Local Authority and the education unions about what the Governments' plans may mean for a safe phased return for increased numbers of children to our school. My priority, first and always, in all discussions and decisions – no matter how contentious they may be, is the safety and protection of the lives of our children, our staff and our families. I make no apologies for that, because that is the responsibility that I accept and which – in these times – is truly immense.

I have concerns – for the whole school community - regarding the known importance of social distancing (which is impossible to achieve in any school, let alone ours!), ensuring that I can equip staff with the necessary protection to aid them to fulfil their roles safely and with the least anxiety possible around your children, and the other logistics involved in getting our children safely to and from school - and keeping them appropriately supervised and supported whilst with us.

Let me be very clear; all of us want to get more of our pupils back into school as soon as it is safe to do so. We miss them, and you all, so very much! However, the coronavirus is a deadly killer with hundreds of people still dying every day, and as low as the risk may reportedly be for children in terms of contracting it (although not necessarily carrying it), there is a risk . . . and every single life is beyond precious to us. I will therefore do everything in my power to protect the lives of all. Our staff willingly devote themselves to the care and education of children and young people, and none of us want to see classrooms empty for a day longer than they need to be. Staff have continued to work hard since we saw you last in so many ways, and most recently by creating our brand new 'Phoenix Phase Curriculum' which is especially designed to support our children in returning to school, when the time comes, and which focuses on their wellbeing and readjusting to school life and expectations.

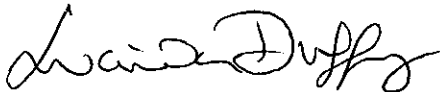
Headteacher: Miss Lucinda Duffy NPQH, BA.Ed QTS

Deputy Headteacher: Mrs Lianne Buchanan BA (Hons), QTS, MA SEN



In the short-term, therefore, nothing can change and therefore we remain only open to a very small number of pupils, on certain days of the week, because Social Care/other agencies have identified that there is a specific need for this. However, we remain committed to working with the Local Authority and other agencies to finding ways to support your children, and you all, whether that be at home or at school. I will provide further information in the coming days and weeks once we are in a position to do so, and I will support you in the decisions that you make for your children, and your families, as best as I possibly can.

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lucinda Duffy', written in a cursive style.

Lucinda Duffy
Headteacher