



12 June 2020

Friday 12th June 2020

To all our children and families,

We are now at the end of our second week of the second half of the summer term. It is very different around the school. Since the 1st June, we have been able to welcome back ‘bubbles’ of children from Key workers, Smart Steps, Foundation, Year 1 and Year 6. We have been really impressed with how well the children have settled into their new routines.

Government update on wider opening

I wanted to write to you once I had heard the update from the Government this week regarding schools. Whilst I welcome the Government’s decision to now allow us the flexibility in school to manage the reopening of school this term, it is still frustrating having no Government clarity on what we will be able to provide from September or how all children will be able to return. At the moment due to limitations with staffing and space, we can only accommodate the year groups above and those children who are vulnerable and children of Key workers.

Do I have to send my child back in?

There remains no pressure to send your child back to school if you don’t feel ready and/or are shielding - it is your choice.

What if my child will still be at home most of this term?

We will continue to offer home learning for the rest of the summer term. We completely understand the pressures at home with parents working too and the loss of momentum of children not having the usual school routine. However, if you now know your child is not likely to be back in school until September, then they will have had six months out of school. When they can return we will do our best to help them catch up, yet to minimise gaps between those in school and those at home, it would be great if parents could continue to do their best to support us in delivering as much of the home learning as you feel you can and send photos of their work to the teacher via the class email.

What will happen from September?

As it stands, we are waiting Government detail and specifics on this following their most recent announcement. We are asking the Government to provide their guidance before the summer holidays. I will be in touch again with an update as soon as I have one. What happens in September will very much depend on whether the Government sticks with class sizes of 15 or allows numbers in bubbles to increase. If class sizes have to stay at 15, we do not have enough additional teachers or physical space to accommodate all of the school full time, all at once.

What about the summer holidays?

It is not our intention to open school over the summer holidays as we need to prepare for September and many staff have their own childcare needs, which would make them unavailable to cover. I have to consider staff well being too. I understand the Government intend to announce next week plans regarding provision over the summer months; however, we shall wait to see what this plan is and what is involved before we confirm our response to this. However, as soon as we can return in September, then we will be assessing the children to support with catch up work as needed and this will be our overriding priority as well as managing pupil well-being.

Polite reminder for children currently attending school

Our staggered start and finish times are working well and we thank parents for being prompt and arriving at the correct time slot. Please could I remind parents to support us with social distancing on entry and exit to school and keep your children with you and not mix with other children from different bubbles- thank you.

End of year reports

School reports will look slightly different this year due to changes in the Government guidance as a result of the pandemic. You will receive your child's report electronically on Friday 3rd July 2020. I will write to you nearer the time to explain this in more detail.

Consultation on Relationships and Sex Education Policy - Reminder

From September 2020 all schools in England and Wales will be expected to implement the revised changes, set out by the Department for Education, for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). The views and opinions of the wider school community are extremely important to us as a school. Whilst we legally have to teach the statutory Curriculum, we feel it is important to share and discuss aspects that may cause some concern.

To introduce parents to this concept and to ensure that everyone is informed, we would like you to review our draft RSE policy, which includes our new SCARF curriculum, and the statutory content of the relationships and sex education programme.

On our website, under 'Our School – Subject Pages – PSHE' you will find our proposed draft policy for RSE, statutory guidance, and our SCARF curriculum, which covers all aspects of PSHE from Pre-school to Year 6.

I would value your feedback that you may have on these during the consultation period of:

21st May- 17th June 2020

Keeping in touch

Remember, if you have any concerns about helping your child learn or you need any other support from the school, please let us know by contacting us via this email address: school@giffardpark.milton-keynes.sch.uk and one of us will get back to you as soon as possible.

We also love seeing the children's fantastic learning at home – please keep sending photos of their work in via the school or class email addresses as we would like to showcase it on Facebook in due course.

Continue to take care and I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Miss E Donoghue

