

Bredhurst Church of England Primary School

Parents as Partners

www.bredhurst.kent.sch.uk

Newsletter 10.05.20

Dear parents,

I am sure that many of you, like me, watched the Prime Minister's address to the nation this evening and will have as many questions as we have as a school.

You will have heard the Prime Minister indicating that the government believes it may be in a position to implement a phased re-opening of schools from 1 June, starting with pupils in reception, year one and year six. This is part of the government's conditional plan, which it says will remain under regular review. Like you, I have only just seen the announcement and that at this stage cannot answer all the question you may have regarding this and what it may mean for your child. I am waiting to receive more information from the government about what this means for our school. However, in the short-term, nothing has changed and I will provide further information in the coming days and weeks once I am able to do so.

The other thing which may now have impact on your families is the announcement that if you cannot work from home then you should go back to work, from tomorrow. If someone in your family now needs to return to work in light of the new advice from the government, I must remind you that we are only able to accept your child at school if you are a key worker - regardless of whether you are having to return to work or not. Please do not just turn up at the school gate tomorrow morning with your child as we need to ensure we have enough staff in school to ensure those in our care are kept safe.

If you are a key worker and need to return to work and your child needs to attend school please could you email me on headteacher@bredhurst.kent.sch.uk the days that your child needs to attend in order for us to ensure we have the correct staff ratio for the children in attendance.

I am certain that like me, you are also a little confused as to the year groups who have been selected to return to school initially. I struggle to understand how we can apply social distancing to the children who need the most interaction - those in Reception and the decision for year 1 children to return to school from 1st June is somewhat baffling! You will be pleased to know that I have been asked (alongside a number of primary head teachers across Kent) to put forward the concerns and questions we have as a school regarding the reopening of schools and the things we will need to put in place.

As a school, we have been anticipating a phased return and have already begun the working out how we maintain social distancing with 125 children. Our average class sizes are 7m x 8m, with social distancing each class will be to accommodate 8 pupils. This means with the return of year R,1 and 6 we will have 55 children, meaning we would need 7 classrooms to accommodate these children safely. In addition, we have the 8 children of key workers who currently have been regularly attending (who do not fit into any of these year groups). This would now mean approx. 8 classrooms, and the staff to teach all 8 groups of children – a logistical impossibility! We will also be continuing to offer remote learning for the children in the other 4 year groups when the children in the returning year groups return to school. Currently these plans are not practical.

As a school will be spending the next few weeks working out how you can safely bring your children to school and collect them, whilst keeping two metres apart from other parents who are bringing their children to school, possibly with your other child in tow who does not fit the year,1,6 or key worker criteria! I will also be evaluating how many staff we might have on site at any one time and working out classroom layouts!! Interesting and challenging times ahead!

All of us want to get more pupils back into school as soon as it is safe to do so. We have devoted our lives and careers to the care and education of young people and do not want to see classrooms empty for a day longer than they need to be. However, the first priority has to be the safety of everyone in the school community. Until the national guidance (once known) can be safely applied, I will continue to make decisions

regarding the safety of pupils and staff based on our school. Please be assured that as ever I will ensure the safety of our whole school community will be our priority.

I do not want to finish this newsletter on a negative note, so want to remind you to send in your VE day pictures of your child celebrating over the Bank Holiday, in what was beautiful British weather. I hope that you all got the opportunity to get out in the sunshine and spend some time celebrating as a family or within your communities, from a distance!

Finally, I would like to remind you that nothing will change immediately; we now have some time work out how to safely reconfigure our school and ensure that each and every one of our children feels like an important part of the school community whether they will be learning within the school building or remotely.

Please do continue to keep safe and well and as soon as I have any updates, I will ensure that I notify you.

Best wishes

Mrs Michelle Cox