

3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents/carers,

### Re: Phased reopening of school

Thank you for your patience whilst we have been awaiting Government guidance, working with unions and the local authority to design the best model to be able to invite more pupils back to West Acton. We are proud of being a nurturing, inclusive school and we desperately want to maintain as much of this as possible.

As you are aware, since 23<sup>rd</sup> March we have only been open to certain groups of pupils. We have been able to look after these pupils really well in school and provide online learning in school for our pupils who have had to stay at home.

The Government has asked us to invite back more pupils from the 1<sup>st</sup> June. As I write, like many Ealing schools we are taking a cautious approach to the wider reopening for pupils other than the group of pupils that we have remained open for since the March closure.

**We intend to be open from the 9th June on a phased and staggered return for pupils in Year 6, Year 1 and Reception. This will be a very different model of school, which places the safety of pupils, parents and staff at the heart of it. However, pupils will not be in school five days a week.**

We appreciate that some parents will be happy with this model, some parents will be disappointed that we cannot offer the full five days and then some will be unsure of whether to send their child in to school at all. I can only offer my apologies and empathy for all of your situations and I am sure that you are aware of the constraints and issues facing schools reopening, especially such a large school as we are.

Details of dates, timings and adaptations needed will follow for those year groups later today.

***Sadly, we will not be able to welcome back pupils in Years 2,3,4,5 and Nursery this academic year.***

As you know we have actually remained open for certain groups of children and that will continue. If you think that your child is now eligible to attend this provision it is vital that you email me on [admin@west-acton.ealing.sch.uk](mailto:admin@west-acton.ealing.sch.uk).

We support all our families and respect their decisions. No fines will occur if you choose to keep your children off school for this summer half term, nor will attendance be monitored in the same way. These are unprecedented times, as the government say, and it is important that we are at liberty to make our own choices, based on our own beliefs, family circumstances and interpretation of this pandemic. Our staff all have families

too and many of us are faced with the same choices you all are, so we empathise with you. We would not expect any of our families to be pressured by other parents – this is a very difficult time for everyone.

Safety has, and will always be, our uppermost priority. We have followed Government and Ealing guidance and taken extra measures to ensure staff and pupils feel safe to return to school. We cannot eliminate all risk of the virus (and we are all going to have to learn how we can live with the risk of the virus, potentially until a vaccine is discovered).

Our Governing Body and staff have studied our cautious plans about inviting more pupils back to West Acton and we have a comprehensive risk assessment completed in an effort to mitigate risk. As the weeks pass, we will follow news from Public Health England about the status of the virus then we may need to modify our plans; if needed we will react quickly to shut down sections of the school or even the whole school or if we did not have enough staff to ensure the safety of everyone. The Government general advice on returning back to school can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june)

More details of measures that we will take will follow with a Question and Answer sheet and a video for the children. For now, here are some broad details for you:

### **1. 'Bubbles'**

Each Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 class will be divided into groups of 15 children and become a 'bubble'. Each bubble will have their own classroom and in most cases two members of staff. The bubble will stay together and not mix with any other bubble. They will eat in their classroom and go out to a designated area of the playground/field. We won't be using supply staff, so the adults will be from West Acton but will be from across the school. Our existing provision for keyworkers/EHCP children will become a 'bubble' based in our pavilion.

### **2. Minimising Risk of infection**

You must not send your child in if they are at all poorly. As a matter of course we ask you to check with them verbally in the morning how they are feeling. You know your child best. This is so important. You will not be penalised for attendance. We may check your child's temperature during the day. If your child or a member of your family have symptoms of Covid 19- a new persistent cough or a temperature (please see Public Health England Guidance on this) - then you must all self-isolate for 14 days. Please inform school, so that we can inform others and tests can be ordered. We are being equally stringent with all staff members. Tests can be ordered through Public Health England/NHS.

Children will be reminded of the 2 metre social distancing rule, good hygiene such as washing their hands and throwing their rubbish and tissues in the bin. There will be signs and lessons about this but please do talk to them about this at home too.

### **3. Quality online education for ALL pupils**

Education for all pupils (even in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6) will continue to come through our online learning provision, as it has been. This will reflect what is happening in school, so provision will

essentially be very similar, to maintain consistency and ensure that those at home are getting the same education and continue to feel part of West Acton.

#### **4. Support by email or telephone**

We remain committed to supporting all our families to please continue to get in touch. Particularly if you would like a food parcel. At this stage, the EDENRED FSM voucher systems looks like it is continuing. Class teachers will call the pupils in their classes, each fortnight and arrange an online class meeting for the whole class each week too – further details to come.

We are looking forward to welcoming back more of the children, whilst remembering and supporting those we cannot bring back and hope that this start will help us be prepared and able to welcome our whole school back in September.

Yours faithfully,

**Karen Kondo**  
Headteacher

**William Rollason**  
Chair of Governors