



The Withens
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Headteacher: Mrs Andrea Curran

21st May 2020

Dear Parents and Families,

I hope you are keeping well and safe. Thank you for your recent response to confirm that you wish to **accept** a place in Reception / Year 1 or Year 6 for your child after the half term break, should the Government continue with its plans to re-open schools to more children.

I would also like to thank you for your on-going patience as we work through the most recent guidance. This is a complex situation with a great many changes needed to be made to the way we work in school in order to ensure we are as safe as we possibly can be when your child(ren) returns.

As stated in my letter last week, there will be significant differences in school and currently we are working hard to implement the restrictions that will need to be in place.

It is the wish of the all the school staff, the Local Authority and our school Governors that we bring children back to school safely and therefore slowly, taking maximum care to ensure the well being and safety of each year group.

We will therefore start Term 6 on Monday 8th June with the Critical Worker children currently accessing emergency childcare. They, and all the staff, need to have a period of induction for the far more stringent restrictions now required of schools.

Our intention for your child(ren) in YR, Y1 and Y6, is to phase them back into school so that we can review our health and safety measures as we proceed with

reopening. This is in line with the majority of schools locally as our main concern is and always will be, the safety and well-being of our children and staff.

The proposed dates for the staged introduction into school are as follows (these are provisional, pending further Government guidance):

Year 6 – Monday 15th June

Year 1 – Monday 22nd June

Reception - Monday 22nd June

This will ensure our school is as 'Covid secure' as possible, through thorough cleaning, organisation of new learning 'PODS' (the group your child will be allocated) and a health and safety check before children return. It will also be necessary to stagger the start and end times for each Pod as we have to maintain social distancing for yourselves as parents at drop off and pick up times.

We are starting the oldest children first as we believe they are best suited to adapt to the new social distancing restrictions and can then model to our younger children.

Home Learning Teacher support and extra cleaning

As you will appreciate, the vast majority of our children are not returning to school. Even in YR, Y1 and Y6, the numbers are very small indeed. We therefore also need to ensure all teachers have time in each week to continue to provide the Home Learning resources and ongoing support that they have been doing so far during the lockdown to their class crews.

Therefore, it is our intention that non-Critical Worker children will attend school for 4 days per week. This will enable our teachers who will all be in school, to have their planning and preparation time as they undertake their new 'joint roles' of teaching in school, and supporting Home Learning remotely at the same time.

It will also be necessary to clean all teaching resources each week, as well the more stringent cleaning of the whole school building.

As I am sure you are all aware, there is still a national debate about children returning to school, so please bear with us if it becomes necessary to change these proposals after the half term break.

We will stay in close contact with you all regarding any changes to our proposed start dates, attendance days and arrangements for dropping off and collecting children at school. **Further information and details will be sent out to you the week beginning 8th June.**

In the meantime, please look after yourselves and we hope that you enjoy some rest and relaxation over the Whit break.

Yours warmly
Andrea Curran
(Headteacher)