

Monday 18th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you regarding the recent Government announcement about children returning to school sometime after the Half Term break. Although the Government is very clear that it wishes to get all children and young people back into education as soon as it is safe to do so, they will make a final decision about exactly when to return on the basis of the scientific and medical advice at the time. The current intention is to have a phased re-opening to welcome the children from Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 back into schools first, from the week commencing June 1st at the earliest. This date will be reviewed by the Government nearer the time to ensure that the evidence suggests that it is safe for pupils to return. Other year groups will be invited to join them when the scientific and medical advice suggests that it is appropriate for us to have a larger number of children within our schools. The schools will, of course, continue to provide places for the children of Key Workers and the other children who they have been supporting during the time of partial closure from all year groups. When the defined year groups do return to school, the schools will continue to provide home learning activities for Years 2, 3, 4, and 5 until they too are able to return to the classroom.

Our schools have been very busy since the announcement last Sunday to consider how they can prepare for the defined year groups to attend school, and to ensure the school environment is as safe for your children, and for our staff, as it is possible to be. We are currently receiving much government guidance on what is needed to do this. This guidance is still changing so it is not possible for the schools to give you detailed information at the moment.

The main guidance currently is:

- to stagger arrival and pick up times;
- to keep group-sizes under 15 initially;
- to keep children and teachers in these groups whilst in school;
- to minimise contact between the groups;
- to keep the groups in the same classroom space;
- to provide regular outdoor activities;
- to provide regular hygiene and hand-washing opportunities;
- to provide regular and enhanced cleaning of classroom spaces;

Every school environment is different and each of our schools will have to manage the opportunities for children during their time on the school site in different ways. In addition, schools will be managing children's access to the site, and will have different drop-off and pick-up times, to ensure the children and yourselves can stay safe and maintain social distancing. As these plans firm up, your headteacher will let you know what is possible in your school with the classroom space and staff available and I can assure you that we will do the very best we can to provide your children with a positive experience whilst maintaining the governments prevention control practices. I am afraid that we are unlikely see a swift return to some of the school activities we enjoyed before the pandemic, but I am sure you will support your teachers to make the very

best of the situation for your children, as you have whilst they have been learning at home.

It is very clear we all need to begin to consider how we live in a world with Coronavirus, as it looks likely the virus will be with us for some time to come. As an Academy Trust, we offer all our staff access to a package called Care First. It provides staff with access to a fantastic set of materials to support their well-being and everyday lives. Due to the pandemic the company has offered us a year's subscription for the parents and carers of our pupils, which we have bought in to as an Academy Trust. We do not know if they will continue with this offer in the future, but we hope you will find it of value this year. Care First provides an extensive website, refreshed daily with articles which are topical; this week there are a number of articles on coming out of lock-down. There is also a parent helpline where you can get advice from an expert on a large number of personal issues. I do hope you find this resource useful and will see it as a valuable support during this time of your lives. To access the website visit carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk/ Enter **ucatp** for the user name. The password is **wellbeing**.

I am sure you will support me in thanking the amazing and inspirational teachers and school staff for all that they have done during this difficult time. They had one day to completely redesign the curriculum and the way that education was delivered to your children at home and are now being asked to redesign the way that education is delivered in school. They have been nothing short of amazing, continuing to engage with you and your children and providing opportunities and support for home learning as well as phone calls e-mails and some wonderful videos, some of which have made me laugh!.

May 20th is National Thank a Teacher day and I thought you might like to see the attached resources, and encourage your children to produce an e-card, a video, poster, story or picture to say Thank You to the teachers and other school staff.

https://thankateacher.co.uk/thank-a-teacher-day/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

In the meantime, I would like to thank you for your support for the school during this challenging time.

Keep safe and stay alert.

Best Wishes



Sue Samson
CEO University of Chichester Academy Trust