Dear Parents and Carers

As you will be aware, the Government has released Guidance for the full opening of schools in the Autumn Term.

**The new guidance includes public health advice, endorsed by Public Health England (PHE), and can be found at:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

The guidance may of course change, especially if the ongoing situation does. As with all previous guidance it is, by necessity, detailed, complex and not always clear, but does recognise that all schools will need to interpret it differently.

Within the guidance there is also the clear instruction that every school will also need to plan for the possibility of a local lockdown and how they will ensure continuity of education. Our school will, if this occurs, defer quickly back to the model of **online learning** that has been used for the past few weeks, with changes and improvements made as deemed necessary and possible. A plan which outlines the above will be presented to the Governing Body for their approval by the end of this term.

The guidance provides a system of controls to support schools in effectively minimising risk, which can be implemented according to each school’s individual circumstances. There are some essential steps that must be taken.

**The** **essential measures include**:

* A requirement that people who are ill stay at home;
* Robust hand and respiratory hygiene;
* Enhanced cleaning arrangements;
* Active engagement with NHS Test and Trace;
* Minimising potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable.

***ALL THESE WILL BE CLEARLY IMPLEMENTED UPON OUR RETURN TO SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER.***

**In addition, and linked to the above, schools must have a system of controls as follows:**

* Minimise contact with those who are unwell by ensuring they do not attend school;
* Clean hands thoroughly and more often than usual;
* Ensure good respiratory hygiene (‘*Catch it, Bin it, Kill it’*);
* Introduce enhanced cleaning;
* Where necessary wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE);

**All THESE POINTS MUST (AND WILL) BE IN PLACE IN SCHOOLS AT ALL TIMES.**

***Grouping children:***

It is stated that it is important that schools do everything possible to reduce contacts and mixing, while delivering a broad and balanced curriculum. Guidance regards children and staffing mixing is already covered in school. It essentially advises that sensible approaches are taken, with distancing where possible. The guidance suggests continued use of class bubbles, or groups (which will now be referred to as classes), but recognises that this may be impacted by:

* Children’s ability to distance;
* The layout of the school;
* The feasibility of keeping classes separate.

The nature of our school immediately means there are a number of issues that mean classes cannot be kept separate, with no contact between children in other classes. Some of these issues are as follows:

1. The dining hall and where children have their lunches
2. Worship, and how we come together as a school family
3. Teaching, non-teaching and peripatetic (e.g. Music) staff need to be able to work with children from various classes (again, with distancing measures suggested);
4. The layout of the school, and shared toilet facilities (with advice to not provide any new, extra facilities) mean that even with regular cleaning children will be in contact with others from different classes on a regular basis.
5. PE sessions
6. After School Enrichment clubs

We will be carefully considering these issues over the next couple of weeks - studying the guidance in detail and then completing a full risk assessment ready for September. This will be approved by staff, governors and our Health and Safety advisors.

**On the basis of the above, we propose that when all children return to school in September that we will follow all essential measures and take all appropriate precautions, as well as many others, but that we will not be having classes kept separate from each other any more than is 'normal' – the reasons outlined above clearly indicate that there will be contact and potential transmission of anything between classes, regardless of the measures taken.**

This remains a proposal, pending further studying of the guidance, feedback and discussions with the various parties but seems the clearest, most sensible approach to a return to ‘normal’ school with the appropriate measures (hygiene, cleaning etc) all in place to minimise risk.

We would welcome feedback from parents on the above, so a survey has been created, which can be accessed by clicking on the link below or by copying and pasting the link into your browser address bar.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=4wVWRCz1iUe-ZtfddAc8sozc_1yXfPBDqfo2Bu2sjelUNU5RNEhQQjlJVjlGQlFWTTRaMFZFOFpUUy4u>

Please note that there is no requirement for parents to complete this, it is for those that wish to share an opinion. All future plans, decisions, risk assessments and other relevant details will be shared on the website.

If anyone wishes to discuss any of the above with me directly then please do not hesitate to contact me in the usual way.

Yours sincerely



Miss S Sanderson

Acting Headteacher