

29 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your support this week.

We are ready and very excited about welcoming more children back to school next week. This is very important for our leaders, teachers and support staff who have truly missed the children and long for when a new 'normal' can start to be established. As your children are so precious to you and us, we are taking a very measured and careful approach to the increasing return of the children.

Our Headteachers have worked with their teams very precisely to make sure that the thorough and very detailed risk assessments are understood and in place. We have enough hand sanitiser ready and children will wash their hands for at least 20 seconds at planned and supervised intervals during each day. The cleaners are ready and have been given a lot of overtime to make sure that we can have a rotation of cleaning of classrooms and bathrooms throughout each day. No classrooms have any soft toys or play clothes (not a big issue for Year 6) and children will not share resources without them being cleaned. Bins with lids have been purchased so we can observe 'Catch It, Bin It, Kill It'.

The Legionella sampling is taking place. To be clear this is going above and beyond expectation and is not a necessary requirement and is taken as an additional precaution. During lockdown we have flushed all water sources each week to keep our small number of critical care and vulnerable children as safe as possible at each school. This is a part of our site teams' usual cleaning habits that has been undertaken as robustly as ever since school closures were introduced in late March.

Communications with our Year 6 children's parents have taken place so that we have the best knowledge to plan for each child's safety. Classrooms catering for 9 -12 children have been set up so that everyone can keep a 2m social distance.

The views of Year 6 parents are mixed and extremely personal to their own family situation. We totally support parents in making their best decision for their own family and every parent must do what they are confident to do as we start this important return to school.

Our main priority is to keep every child and their family safe and this involves planning which classroom is to become each child's 'bubble', which adults will be in that bubble and which school gates, school entrance and classroom doors they will use. Classes are having staggered opening times with 10-15 minutes between each bubble so that we can ensure that there are no bottlenecks throughout our sites. On their first day back each child will receive instruction about movement around school where one-way systems are possible and how to ask for help.

What we are asking you to do is to let your child's school have 24-hour notice before sending them back to school. Next week is for Year 6 only from Tuesday 2nd onwards. Currently about one-third of the Year 6 have notified their school that the children are returning on Tuesday. We are happy to have any eligible Year 6 child back to school yet we do need to plan and be ready for them in order to keep our promise to keep all children and staff as safe as we possibly can.

The children who have attended school throughout the lockdown will remain in their bubbles which will often include mixtures of year groups. We are asking their teachers to produce the more usual activities that links to their usual year group's curriculum so that learning starts to become more formal from now on.

On the evening of Wednesday 3rd June, we will review the return in each school so far and put in any other measures that will help more children return safely. On Thursday 4th, it is intended that we can inform Year 1 parents about the plans for their return from Monday 8th June 20. We will then ask Year 1 parents to let us know on Friday 5th if they wish for their children to return to school on the following Monday.

We are really aware that children have very different reactions to this pandemic. For some children, this significant amount of change will make them feel some anxieties about their return to school. Staff will listen and hear what your child says and if we feel that any child needs extra support during this difficult life period then we will make every effort to source this. Please do let teachers or the Headteacher know if you think this could be your child as this is extremely important to us all.

Everyone in all our schools are really keen that we do our very best to do what we say and whilst there can be no absolute certainty, **we will do whatever we can to keep everyone as safe as we possibly can in these uncertain times.**

Please do be in touch about any questions or queries you have. Your head teachers and all of the LLMAT staff are really happy to speak (remotely) with anyone should you want to talk.

Take care and keep safe

Claire Thompson
Acting CEO/AO