



14th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

A message from the Chair of Governors

In these very difficult times it has been good to hear of the fantastic learning that has been going on in homes all over the village. In my own experience it has been rewarding to find out more about how my child learns (or doesn't!) and it has filled me with admiration for our school staff who teach all the time. Since the school closed back in March, the staff have been working tirelessly providing the learning packs, opening for key worker children, changing reading books, contacting families and gearing up for online learning, as well as all the curriculum and financial planning for next year. There is currently a huge amount of work going on to plan for the possibility of starting to re-open in June. As you will know, there is still a national debate going on about how this can best be done, and Thomas Johnson will be following the situation closely. Further local details, such as the position of Dawn to Dusk, are yet to be determined, and will be communicated to parents once the situation is clearer.

Please rest assured that the school is consulting with other schools and the Local Authority, as well as research findings and the latest government guidance, to ensure that, when it opens, the school can be as safe as possible for our children and their families.

Tim Mason

Chair of Governors

I am sure you have listened with interest to the Government's recent announcements as the country moves into the new phase of Stay Alert, Control the Virus and Save Lives. There has been much discussion about how schools can re-open safely, and what this might mean to pupils, and yourselves as parents and carers.

Since Sunday's announcement, staff and I have been working tirelessly on scrutinizing advice and recommendations in order to investigate different scenarios and draw up plans so that pupils in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 can return to school, in some format, on the 1st June (providing we have confirmation from the Government that it is safe to do so). Our priority is to ensure the safety of pupils, parents and staff above all else.

As you know, advice is continually being updated, and at all times we must be vigilant and responsive to the latest information and guidance. We know that the date of 1st of June may yet change.

However, I wanted to reassure you on our thoughts at this point in time:

- Complex risk assessments are already being drawn up, and detailed procedures and protocols will be in place when the school does reopen - all these will be available for you to see in advance of 1st June.
- Procedures in place will include social distancing through smaller groups and the spacing out of tables/seating arrangements. Children will be grouped together with siblings. There will be plenty of outdoor activities. Each child will have their own named bag of equipment. Drop off and collection times and points will be staggered, to ensure parents and carers are supported to maintain their own social distancing. These are just some of the measures we will put in place.
- Lessons will prioritise on reintroducing your child to the school environment, with them feeling safe and secure, and with creative activities balancing English and Maths tasks.
- We know that some pupils will not be joining us - and this will be due to either the child, or family member, being clinically extremely vulnerable. Your child will not be penalised for being unable to attend, as health and safety are our priorities. They will continue to receive learning activities that can be carried out at home.

- Google Classroom activities will continue for all children who are not in school, either due to their year group or medical need.
- Key worker and vulnerable children in any year group will continue to be encouraged to attend.

It is likely that the return to school will be on a part time basis, with children being allocated certain days at the start or end of the week. In order to plan successfully, I need to consider the possible numbers of children who will be in school from those three identified year groups (Nursery, Reception and Year 1). Therefore I attach a simple form which I ask that you complete if your child is in Year N, R and 1. **Please return the form to Helen (or text/email your answers) by Friday 15th May.** Obviously, we will not hold you to this! We understand that you may change your mind, and that you will need clear evidence of our plans to reassure you before your child steps back into school, but I do need a rough estimate of numbers in order to plan classrooms, ratios and sufficient equipment.

In the meantime, please continue to contact your teacher if you need any help or advice with the Google Classroom activities. Alternatively, you can contact Helen Barron with any query or concern and she will contact the relevant staff member for you.

The staff, governors and I are delighted with the wonderful work your children have been sending in. We are amazed at how hard everyone is working, and want to thank you for the fantastic support you are giving. We know it hasn't been easy! Please keep sending your photos in - they are the highlight of our week.

With best wishes,

Marian Haimes

Headteacher

Child's Name Class:
1. How do you feel about your child coming back to school again?
2. What are your hopes for your child when they come back to school?
3. What can teachers do to make coming back to school go well for your child?
4. Will your child be returning to school on 1st June 2020? Yes / No / I'm not sure
If your answer is "No", or "I'm not sure", please state your reason below:

5. Do you have any concerns or thoughts not covered by these questions?

Parent signature Date:

Please return to Helen Barron by email (hbarron@thomasjohnsonschool.co.uk) , or text your answers to her on 07724 181661 by **Friday 15th May** . Thank you.