



St John's Highbury Vale C of E Primary School

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Interim Head of School: Mrs Alice Shaw

Interim Executive Head: Mrs Tonnie Read

Thursday 18th June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: Face to Face session for each child currently not attending school

We hope this letter finds you all safe and well. As we come to the end of another successful week of social distancing and online learning at St. John's, I write to further update you on our progress during these unprecedented times.

As you may know, schools must act in accordance with the guidance published by the Government. Schools do not have the autonomy to act outside the Government's guidance. The guidance is changed and updated regularly, often with little or no notice, and schools are expected to adapt their processes and protocols to put the guidance in place. All schools are different (size of school, number of pupils on roll, pupil take up of places, socioeconomic make up, building shape, staffing) which means they have different restrictions and challenges. The guidance is very clear that schools must make the best and safest decisions for their schools in line with the guidance.

Therefore, in line with the guidance, we have managed to make space for 77 children split into two year six bubbles, and then four further bubbles spread across Early Years, KS1 and KS2. Each bubble is supervised by allocated staff members, who support the children and cover each other during break times and lunch times as adults and children cannot move across bubbles. Teachers continue to provide online learning, feedback and weekly google class meets, as well as supporting the learning onsite. Using all our available resources, at present, we have reached the capacity and so cannot invite further children back to school. Should our capacity to invite more pupils back increase, we are required by the Government to invite back the remaining children from Year 1 and Reception back first before looking to other year groups. Guidance from the Government states that we can only welcome back additional children where:

- ***they have already made provision available for children of critical workers, vulnerable children, and children in nursery, reception, year 1 and year 6 and have ensured as many as possible are able to attend (especially for those who would particularly benefit from being in school because of other disadvantage)***
- ***they can accommodate more children while still following the approaches set out in the protective measures guidance and their own risk assessment***
- ***they do not require additional funding, staff or classrooms to do so. Other community buildings (such as village halls) should not be used to expand capacity this term***





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I appreciate how disappointing this may be for many of our families, we are also disappointed, as educators, we know that the best place for our pupils is in school. However, this week, we welcomed the changes in the guidance, published on the 15th of June, which state that schools can invite back children from outside the specified priority groups, for a face to face session at school before the summer holidays. Therefore, each child, who is currently not attending school, will be offered one face to face session at school before the summer term. Face to face sessions will be two and a half hours long and will be held on a Friday morning in July.

We feel that the face to face session will be beneficial to the children who have not been at school since the lockdown began as they will experience: coming back to their school, a change of environment, playing on the playground, and seeing the staff and some of their peers again. All protective measures including hand hygiene, socially distanced desks, small pupil group sizes, and staggered break times will be in place as per the Government's guidance for educational settings. The children will spend the morning being familiarised with the school environment, sharing their experiences and feelings during group circle time, completing curriculum activities and enjoying a break time outside (weather permitting). The morning will finish with class worship and an opportunity for prayer and reflection.

If your child is not currently attending school, please complete the survey below to state whether you would or would not like your child to come to school for a face to face session before the summer holidays.

Child's name: _____

Please choose one of the options and send your reply back via email:

1. I would like my child to attend a face to face session at school in July

2. I would not like my child to attend a face to face session at school in July

If you would not like your child to attend a face to face session, it would be extremely helpful if you could provide us with some more details.

The decision for a child to attend a session is at the discretion of their parents and we will support your decision. Attendance at school is not compulsory at this time, however, we would strongly recommend that you consider this opportunity for your child to have some closure on this academic year.

As always, we wish you a safe and relaxing weekend and look forward to seeing as many of you soon.

If you have any queries regarding the contents of this letter or would just like some further clarity, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Tonnie Read
Interim Executive Headteacher

