



Garfield Primary
Today's children, tomorrow's future.

15th May 2020

Dear Parents/carers,

Staggered Re-opening of Schools for Nursery, Reception, Years 1 and Year and Parent Survey (return by Tuesday 19th May at 9am)

I hope you are all keeping well, are staying safe and making the best of the current situation.

As you will all be aware, on Sunday the Prime Minister recently outlined plans for schools to start opening to some year groups from the date of 1st June 2020 at the earliest. .

The government plan is for schools to open first for Nursery, Reception, Years 1 and 6 children ONLY (potentially almost 200 children in our school).

As a school we have been keeping up to date with the guidance of the Department of Education. It is important that you understand that in this week alone, schools have been sent out guidance on a daily basis around the proposed reopening; we continue to work as hard as we can to understand the guidance and do all we can to plan for keeping our children, staff and families safe when the school does reopen.

I, alongside other school leaders have started planning for a proposed reopening. Given the need to plan for an entirely different school environment in which every aspect of school life will be changed, and each change itself needs to be risk assessed we are not yet able to determine if it will be possible to restart on the 1st June.

There are many things to consider (primarily around health and safety) and that is why I am sending out a survey for parents to see what your views are. It is particularly important for me to know how many parents of pupils in Nursery, reception, Year 1 and Year 6 will want their child to return to school in the Summer term.

We appreciate that not all parents will find a survey useful or easily accessible and so members of our office team will be telephoning parents in these specific year groups. **Parents of pupils in other year groups should also fill in the survey. Please return the survey by Tuesday 19th May at 9am**

I know that our children miss their friends, teachers and staff – we miss you all too! Parents and carers are being strongly encouraged by the Government to return their children to school when schools indicate that it is safe to do so. **It is likely that parents and carers will have the opportunity to keep children at home if they wish to do so. Parents will not face attendance fines if they make this choice.**

It is important that I give you some information about what school will look like for pupils on return. As we are still working on our plans, routines and systems, I will keep you updated in further letters and emails. Before any pupils return, I would want to make sure all parents and pupils are clear on the new expectations and routines. I think it is important that you fully understand that it will be very different to what school usually was like (prior to the Coronavirus pandemic).

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On return to school:

- To ensure safe social distancing, everyone on site will have to try to abide by the 2-metre rule; however this may not be possible in many classrooms due to room sizes.
- No class groups will be larger than 15 pupils. We have already decided that we will have smaller group sizes of around 8-10
- Pupils will need to be in small teaching groups (referred to as a 'Safety Bubble' – same adult and same children at all times).
- We will need to minimise any sharing of equipment / resources between pupils and minimise pupils bringing in things from home.
- Due to splitting the classes for smaller group sizes and considering staff availability, this means your child may not be taught by their usual class teacher. In some cases it could mean a support staff member is with the group.
- There will be staggered starts to the day and staggered finish times to avoid congestion at the school gates and one adult only dropping off and collecting.
- Lunches will be eaten in 'bubbles' and we will have to look at how we organise and serve lunches to maximise safety.
- Outside play will be staggered and group games and pupils mixing out of their "safety bubble" will not be possible.

We take safety very seriously and so are working on putting in place many measures to do all we can to keep everyone safe. We will be cleaning surfaces continuously throughout the day and have already ordered further supplies of soap and sanitiser. Staff will wear PPE for First Aid and where appropriate elsewhere in the school deemed. We are still receiving guidance on this issue.

When Garfield is safe to reopen, I think it's important to reassure you that we will endeavour to make the experience as positive as possible. We recognise that children will be anxious and the small "Safety Bubbles" groups will help with this.

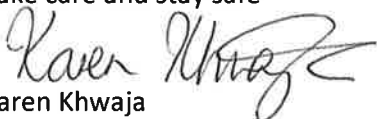
We recognise that as parents, you will be anxious too and will continue to communicate with you what we are doing to maximise safety.

The youngest children will find this all very difficult. They won't have access to all the practical resources they would normally have because they all have to be kept clean to avoid infection. Young children learn by touching, doing, being with others and sharing – all of which will have to be limited as far as is possible. We are therefore having to think and plan for teaching and working very differently.

Please do fill in the survey. The numbers who want to return are needed before we can plan further.

I appreciate that this is a worrying time for all and please know that I am sending you all my best wishes.

Take care and stay safe



Karen Khwaja
Headteacher