



OUR LADY OF LOURDES
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

THE GREEN
ROTTINGDEAN
BRIGHTON BN2 7HA

www.ourladyoflourdesprimaryschool.co.uk



June 11th 2020

Re: Covid Update

Dear Parents and Carers

As you may have heard, on Wednesday of this week, we received the news that the Local Authority was in a position to support the wider opening of schools in accordance with the plans and risk assessments that each school had prepared. For us, this means that we will be welcoming back the Year 6 children whose parents had indicated, via our surveys, that they wanted their children to return. This will start on Monday 15th June. As I outlined in the joint letter from myself and the Governors on Tuesday, this phased return of children will eventually lead to some children in Reception and Year 1 coming back. The plans for the return of children in Year 6 has been shared with the relevant families and this will also be the case as Reception and Year 1 are phased back to school. I welcome parental support in sticking to the arrangements that we have organised for these year groups and also thank them in advance for their understanding of our inability to make individual arrangements – it's not that we don't want to help, it's that we simply have no capacity to alter what we've set down and risk assessed.

Whilst this phased return is a move in the right direction, I am extremely aware that this change in arrangements has a potential negative impact for some of us. Those parents with children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 who choose to continue with the home schooling; and those with children in Years 2,3,4 and 5 will no doubt be concerned around the provision for their children – especially in light of the DfE announcement that plans to have Years 2-5 at school before the Summer have been shelved. As a parent of a child in Year 4; I completely understand these feelings. Our approach is that the phased opening will continue to allow teachers to make contact with their classes in the way that they have been doing during the crisis so far. Work will continue to be set and where relevant, packs will be made for specific children as has happened this week with the Phonics work that has been prepared for some of our younger pupils. We're also discussing how we can support the children with their transitions to their new classes and new staff and I will be writing again to firm these plans up so that you know what to expect.

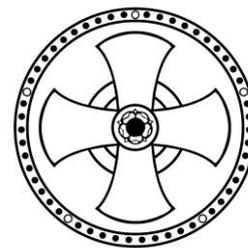
As the time apart from normal lessons increases; so do my thoughts around our ability to provide video lessons and 'live' learning opportunities for the children. As you know, our approach thus far has been to direct families towards the Oak Academy DfE site which is superbly resourced and engaging (I've found it invaluable when trying home schooling with my two children). The reason for us taking this approach was that the resources that underpin such lessons are beyond what we have the capability for at the moment at Our Lady's. As we move further into the crisis though, it seems increasingly clear that this will need to be something that we offer, especially as current thinking seems to be that the normality that we enjoyed prior to lockdown is still an indeterminable way off; and certainly may not be here in time for the new Autumn Term. I have met with IT advisors this week to look at how we can plan to increase our IT provision to a place where, should we need to, we could offer video lessons as part of a blended learning approach in the autumn. This could look like children having some time in

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school, some online learning from the website and 'live lessons'. There's work to be done here, of course, but I will be speaking to Governors about this as well as the Local Authority. As always, I'll endeavour to keep you all updated with how this progresses. We're also closely monitoring the guidance around the 2m social distancing rule, which also seems to be under increased speculation and is a limiting factor to having children return.

Once again, I thank you for your understanding and support as we move into another phase of our response to the pandemic. Having met with Catholic Heads yesterday, it's clear that each school is moving towards their solutions in an autonomous way, so comparisons between the provision we're all making is very difficult – thank you for the support you've shown to the way Our Lady's has responded so far – we all really appreciate that.

You can expect further news from me next week to update you on how the phased return of Year 6 has gone and also to keep you up to date with the arrangements for the transition of your children into their next classes, including how they'll meet their new teachers. As you'd expect, the thinking around these issues has already begun.

Continue to take care of yourselves and your families and please do get in touch if there's anything you need from us. Families of Key Worker Children and Vulnerable children who continue to use our provision; please send children to school from Monday in their own clothes to allow us to monitor the social distancing guidance with other children on site.

With very best wishes,

Head Teacher

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