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Headteacher – Mr Richard Kitching

Wednesday, 3rd June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Plan for Phase 2 of the Wider Opening of School to children of critical workers as well as children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6

Following the undertaking of a thorough risk assessment and planning process based on Government guidance as well as the recently issued advice and guidance from Derbyshire County Council, we are now in a position to move to 'Phase 2' and reopen to further eligible year groups in due course. The year groups that are eligible to return are Reception, Year 1 and Year 6.

Our provisional date for the return to school for **Year 6 pupils is Wednesday 10th June** and our provisional date for the return to school for **Reception and Year 1 pupils is Monday 15th June.**

The government 'strongly encourages' all children in these year groups to attend school in addition to children of parents or carers that are classed as critical workers. However, the government guidance also states that if an eligible child does not attend school, 'parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.'

We recognise that this remains a sensitive situation and we will respect whichever decision parents and carers wish to make regarding the attendance of their child at the present time.

I will now draw your attention to some of the key areas that you will need to consider as we take the next steps towards a wider reopening of our school.

Risk Assessment

Since the government guidance was released, many hours have been dedicated towards considering how the guidance can be implemented successfully in our school. We have also received additional guidance from Derbyshire County Council that we have also had to carefully factor in to our planning and risk assessment. The safety of our pupils and staff is paramount and if we felt we could not implement the guidance then we would not proceed with a wider reopening. The final risk assessment is a long and robustly detailed document that was approved by the full governing body. Although, it is impossible to eradicate all risk, we strongly believe that we have shown due diligence in applying every aspect of the government and local authority guidance in order to minimise the risk of potentially transmitting the coronavirus as much as possible. Nevertheless, I believe that there are two aspects of the risk assessment that you need to consider particularly carefully. They are:

- 1) Social distancing

Much has been made in the media about how difficult it will be for young children (particularly children in Reception and Year 1) to socially distance within a school setting. The government guidance specifically states that **‘unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff.’** Instead the government guidance states that children should be kept in small groups of no more than 15 pupils in a class. It is then the requirement that these groups stay 2 metres apart from other small groups throughout the day and week and mixing is avoided. We will be organising the children into small groups at Egginton, and we will be looking to keep them as small as possible with one member of staff responsible for supervising each small group. However, I think it is really important to state that, despite spacing out seating places so that the pupils are 2 metres apart, it is not going to be possible to keep the children 2 metres apart from other children in their own small group all of the time, particularly for our Reception and Year 1 children. We feel that this is quite a big change to consider in relation to the instructions given during the 2-month national lockdown where people have been required to stay at least 2 metres away from anyone not in their household on the occasions they have been allowed out of the home environment.

2) Staffing

The guidance states that the same member of staff should stay with the same group throughout the day and week wherever possible. We will make our best endeavours to ensure the same staff members stay with the same small group of children, but there may be some occasions where a different staff member has to supervise a group. Examples when this may occur include: lunch times, break times, changes in staff on part time contracts, or if a member of staff is absent due to illness, self-isolation or other unforeseen circumstances. As we are only a small school with a small team of staff, unfortunately there may be occasions when we are simply unable to safely staff the children in line with the government guidance. If this happens we may have to close the school to certain year groups, or, in the most extreme circumstances, the whole school. You will be contacted in the first instance by text message should any of these scenarios occur.

As mentioned earlier, the final risk assessment is a very long and detailed document. It also contains some potentially sensitive information and therefore would not be appropriate to disclose to the whole school community. However, the key elements have been condensed and incorporated into the **Covid-19: Egginton Home School Partnership Guide: Phase 2**. This will be distributed to parents alongside this letter and contains the main requirements that school, children and parents and carers will need to adhere to in order to keep our school community as safe as possible in line with the government guidance. **It is absolutely vital that all parents and carers read this document carefully, ensure that they are able to do everything required of them and also discuss the ‘Children will...’ section with their child prior to their return to school.**

The staggered drop-off and collection timetable is contained within the document. **Please ensure you keep to these times.**

We have also amended our **Behaviour Policy** to reflect the new requirements. Amended changes to the policy are highlighted in yellow.

Informing School of Your Child’s Planned Attendance

Once you have considered all of the information available to you and you have reached a decision regarding your child’s attendance for the proposed dates, please can you inform me as soon as possible. This needs to be done by emailing me directly at:

headteacher@egginton.derbyshire.sch.uk by 5pm on Monday 8th June. Please put

Reception/Year 1/Year 6 Attendance in the subject line and write one of the following appropriate statements in the email:

***(Name of child)* will be attending school in Year 6 from 10th June**

Or

***(Name of child)* will be attending school in Reception/Year 1 from 15th June**

Children of Critical Workers

In line with Phase 1 of the Derbyshire County Council guidance, we have welcomed back to school more children of critical workers this week. If you are a critical worker and you would like your child to attend school from this point onwards, please email me directly as requested before stating which date they will be attending from.

School Dinners/ Packed Lunches

Currently, Etwall kitchen are only providing 'packed lunches' as a school dinner for the pupils they cater for (including Egginton). This is usually sandwiches, desert (yoghurt/ cake/biscuit), fruit or carrot/cucumber and a drink. You are welcome to order a dinner for your child but you need to pay for it on Parentmail (no cash) in line with new DCC guidance. Alternatively, your child can bring in a packed lunch from home.

Supporting Home Learning

Staff will continue to use their best endeavours to support home learning and provide directed learning tasks for pupils that are not attending school at this time. However, it is important to acknowledge that staff will now be teaching a full time table throughout the school day and the level of support, communication and guidance they are able to provide may not be as much as before.

INSET Days – 19th June and the 22nd June

Our planned INSET days are still going ahead in order to carry out staff training that was booked in advance of the Covid-19 outbreak. School will be closed to all pupils on both of these days.

If you are still undecided about sending your child to school but you feel that they might be attending at some point during the remainder of the summer term, please can you email me a likely date that they will be attending from. As I mentioned near the start of this letter, we recognise that this is a very sensitive situation at the moment and we will fully respect your decision and continue to support your child as best we can regardless of the choice you make

In the meantime, I hope you and your families all stay safe and well.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Richard Kitching
Headteacher

