



County Bridge Primary School
Anson Road, Bentley,
Walsall, West Midlands, WS2 0DH
Email: postbox@countybridge.walsall.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mrs R Patel



Monday 18th May

Dear Parents/Carers

I will begin by saying that I hope you and your families are all keeping very well and safe. We have sincerely missed you; our children, our families and the whole school community.

A **huge thank you** to you all, parents, for your support and encouragement of all our children over the past several weeks. You have had to become 'teachers' and I know performing those duties alongside your 'day job' with everything else going on in the world would not have been easy to cope with. Thank you.

You will have seen over the past week the Government's plans to open up schools to priority year groups on Monday 1st June. This will begin with Early Years, Year 1 and Year 6. Schools will continue to offer places to Key worker children and the groups of children who have been attending already over the past weeks.

With the phased opening of schools in mind, I wanted to communicate to you the changes that we are forced to undertake in these unusual times in order to reintegrate our children into school in a safe way during a global pandemic.

I would like you to read the following details in the letter carefully before you decide whether or not you will be sending your child to school. If your child/children are in Early Years, Year 1 or Year 6 you will be receiving a **phone call today** to give you an opportunity to discuss your worries with myself, other senior leaders or office staff members in order to reach a decision on whether you feel it is the right time for your child to return. We will be ringing the parents of children in other year groups later in the week and maybe continue into the first week back after half term.

You know pupil attendance has always been the school and the governing body's key priority for improvement but in these unprecedented times the decision whether you choose to send your child/children will be entirely yours. The Chair of Governors agrees with this strongly. The Government has also made it clear there will be **no fines if children do not attend school**.

While we most definitely want our children back in school - we have missed them tremendously - we want them, their teachers and all our families to remain safe in these difficult times.

The return to school life will be very different to what the children will remember and



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this has been determined by the guidance that the Government has provided for schools.

Currently, we know the following protective measures **MUST** be in place in preparation for the children's return on Monday 1st June:

- The County Bridge classrooms will safely cater for a maximum of 10 children - in some classes it is less than 10 children.
- Children will be placed in small groups with a teacher or teaching assistant (although we will try to keep the children with their class teacher, inevitably, some children will be taught by a different teacher).
- These small groups of children and their teacher will need to be kept apart from other small groups and teachers to reduce the spread of infection.
- Each small group will remain in one classroom area for as much of their time as possible to avoid mixing with other groups and to reduce the spread of infection.
- Within the classroom, for the older children, we will try to maintain the 2 meters social distancing so many of the tables and chairs will be repositioned and surplus furniture removed.
- We have been told by the Government that the transmission of infection in very young children (i.e. Early Years) is very low and they accept that social distancing is impossible with this age group. We have been asked to place these children into small groups and encourage them to remain in their groups.
- We have been asked to limit the resources children will be taking home.
- There will be changes to drop-off and pick up times. We have been asked to stagger them to limit contact between other groups of children but especially between adult to adult.
- Parents will be asked to drop off the children at the gate where the child/children will be met by a member of staff to limit visitors to the school site.
- Any usual friendly gathering of parents we have had at drop-off and collect times will not be possible to reduce the spread of infection.
- Any parent visits to the school will be on strict necessity basis only, limited to one parent only and by prior appointment.
- Parents are discouraged to attend the school's office unless a prior appointment has been made.
- We have been told that protective equipment such as masks are not required in a school setting although the usual protective equipment for nappy changing in Early Years will be worn.
- Curriculum delivery will be decided by the needs of the children.
- Movement of children and adults around school will be limited.
- Break times and lunch times will be staggered, taken in the small groups to avoid mixing of groups.
- Soft furnishings, soft toys and any other play equipment which cannot be regularly cleaned will have to be removed from all the indoor and outdoor areas.
- Parents are asked to avoid public transport as much as possible and are encouraged to walk to/from school.
- Children will be asked to regularly maintain handwashing and good hygiene.



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- Whole school assemblies and any large gatherings will not take place.
- Year 6 will not have their usual end-of-term traditions, sadly. However, when it is safe, we will certainly be looking at inviting our children back in the Autumn term to have the Year 6 presentation evening. This will give our children a chance to sign shirts and autographs as well as an opportunity for photographs. We will also endeavour to take them out for our traditional end-of-term meal.
- A one way system will be operated in and around school as much as possible with clear social distancing markers.

There is a lot of information contained in this letter and at first glance, I know it will be quite overwhelming. But you know that the safeguarding of all our children is always our first priority - the children's safety and health takes precedence over any learning or even school attendance.

As a teacher, I have always felt that I was in an immensely privileged position to look after someone else's child in my care. During these worrying times I know this will be even more important to me and my staff that every child's health and safety will be our first priority. I know for some of our parents the decision for their child's return to school will be made for them as they will have pressure on them to return to work themselves. But, whatever decision you will reach, whether you send your child to school or would prefer your child at home, you will have our full support and your decision will be respected without any judgement at all.

If you have any concerns or worries please raise it in our phone conversation and we will be more than happy to discuss this with you in an honest manner.

Please keep safe and well, everyone.

Yours sincerely

Mrs R Patel
Headteacher



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