Dear Parents/Carers,

Since the announcement from the Secretary of State last week about schools being able to reopen to further pupils we have awaited the guidance on how this would look.

This has been recently published. It made clear the priority should still be given to children of key workers, children working with social care or with an educational healthcare plan and then Year R, 1 and 6 in that order. These children should also be offered full time provision. Only, once provision has been offered to all of these groups, can schools start to consider adding additional pupils.

It goes on to say that may offer more places as long as:

* They require no extra staff to do so
* They require no extra funding to do so
* They require no extra classrooms to do so (eg marquees or portakabins)
* They do not use community buildings, such as village halls, as these remain closed as part of the government’s roadmap.

This has severely limited our options, meaning that once we have accommodated all eligible children we have no further capacity to welcome more pupils back at this time. Each of our year groups bubbles are full, and we have two key worker groups. There is no more classroom space available, or staff to take extra groups.

A large amount of robust discussion has taken place before reaching this decision, taking place over the last week. We have discussed and deliberated many different options and looked at the educational impact both on those that could come into school, and those that would be remaining at home. In considering this we have had to take into account the government guidance. Many of the scenarios we discussed have been ruled out by the new guidance released.

I appreciate this is not the news that you wanted to hear. I also understand that it may be becoming harder to engage children at home with their learning. While the work that is being provided is curriculum specific for your child and makes use of excellent resources provided nationally, I realise this is not a substitute for them being in school. We do not know what September will look like, apart from a strong likelihood that it will not be business as usual. We will be using the remainder of this year to trial and test systems of providing live content, which we will focus on Y2, 3, 4 and 5. This is with a view to them being ready to use, should we need to do so, in September. This will start slowly. It may only be a story, or a quick catch up session to begin with. Over the course of the next four weeks, there should be some form of live content available to your children at home.

Our first preference is to use Microsoft Teams as children within Buckinghamshire have free access to this, but we will also explore other options. I will need to generate a ‘bucksgfl’ (Buckinghamshire Grid for Learning) email account for them. This will take the format of their initial then surname eg [jbloggs@bucksgfl.org.uk](mailto:jbloggs@bucksgfl.org.uk). This email system is hosted by Updata, the broadband provider for Buckinghamshire Council. Please give your consent by filling in the form at <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=GZmirhZZQEWN75o9E_8K_Hlb2RBo7wBFnHB-alfjAVRUMzhFUkZXOTlVVDgxMzA3QjE0TlhaMUVPTS4u>. If they do not have a school email address, they will not be able to access the system.

In addition, we are offering the opportunity to come to school for an outdoor session once a week (weather permitting) to the children in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5. This is only possible outside as we will need to keep children and staff two metres apart. Sessions will take place for mixed Y2/3 groups on Tuesday from 9:30 – 10:15 or 11:15 – 12:00 with the same timings available on Thursdays for mixed Year 4/5 groups. Each session will be limited to 15 children. They will be run by a member of staff who is able to be released from the class they are currently teaching and will not necessarily be their class teacher. These sessions may be sketching, music, building and construction based or a story session and the two sessions on a given day will be the same. Children will not need to wear uniform. Materials will need to be brought from home, but we will try keep this to a minimum and give as much notice as possible. Weather permitting, this will give the children an opportunity for four sessions back in school before the end of term. Sign up for these sessions will take place in the Parents’ Evening section of eSchools, in the same way it does for clubs, and this will go live at 7am tomorrow, Friday 19th June. Each time slot represents one space in a session. Please sign up for one session only.

We will continue to monitor and review the situation and keep abreast of any changes. Should circumstances change and we are able to find a solution that allows more children to return to school we will, of course, do so.

There is nothing more than I would like to do than to open the doors and have everybody return to school tomorrow. School is where they should be, and where I want them to be, however I have to take into account safety of pupils, families and staff and how best to follow the guidance we have been given. This has been an agonising decision, that I, the staff and governors have wrestled with, but it is the only one available to us given the constraints laid out by the guidance.

Thank you for your continued support,

Alastair Haywood

Headteacher