

**ABBAY ACADEMIES TRUST**  
**Executive Headteacher: Mrs S J Moore**

13<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly can I say I hope you are safe and well as we continue to navigate through these challenging and unprecedented times.

As you can imagine we are working hard to ensure we have a risk assessment in place to open on June 1<sup>st</sup> for those children the Government have directed should return to school. Every day we receive further instructions and guidance from the Government, DfE, Public Health England and the Local Authority. We consider all of this, ensure our planning is rigorous and adapt our risk assessment with any changes we are required to make.

There is no direction for us to consult with our parents and carers, and the decision for children to return is down solely to the individual parent/carer. We do completely understand this is a very difficult decision for many of you.

Having digested the most recent Government and DfE guidance issued, we now have some clarity and we will be opening all three of our schools on June 1<sup>st</sup> for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils. Our Keyworkers' and vulnerable children will be able to attend their own school setting from June 1<sup>st</sup>.

A concern we have had, and are sure you have had, is regarding social distancing. This will be especially challenging with younger pupils. The guidance clearly states that, 'We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2m apart from each other and staff'. We will ensure we stick to Government guidelines which include 15 pupils per classroom, avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms, frequent hand cleaning and good hygiene practices, regular cleaning of settings and minimising contact and mixing.

The DfE also states, 'It is still important to reduce contact between children and staff as far as possible, and settings can take steps to achieve that and reduce transmission risk by ensuring children, and staff where possible, mix in a small group and keep that small group away from other people and groups'. We have planned to ensure this will take place as far as possible.

When we open all three of our schools on June 1<sup>st</sup>, and the children and staff are back in their own school setting, as they are initially to be taught in groups of 15, we will expect all staff in school to ensure suitable staffing ratios and we will also need staff to be with the increased number of Keyworkers' and vulnerable children who are not in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. This may mean that your child is not in their usual classroom or with their usual teacher and TA. Of course we will be extremely mindful of the children's health and mental well-being when they return and support them with any changes in our usual loving and caring way. We will stagger playtimes and lunchtimes and also have a raft of other measures to keep as much social distance as possible during the school day. We will not be able to offer Kids' Club provision at this time however, as we cannot minimise mixing which is clearly in the guidance we have been given. Therefore school will be open between 8.55am and 3.15pm. We will be staggering drop off and collection arrangements and will inform you of our plans nearer the time. We are opening Abbey Ark to our Jolly Giraffes (3-4 year olds) between 9am-3pm.

Abbey Academies Trust Senior Leadership Team are currently planning where each member of staff will be based at each school. Remote learning will continue to be prepared for all year groups and be uploaded onto the school websites each Monday as usual, including work for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 so that those children not in school from June 1<sup>st</sup> can still carry out their home learning. Support will be given to staff who may be with a year group they are not used to teaching or supporting.

The DfE have also given clear advice as to which staff and pupils should be in school from June 1<sup>st</sup> and what the exceptions are. These include staff and pupils who have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions and have been advised to shield. We do not expect

people in this category to be attending school, and staff will continue to be supported to work at home as much as possible. Exceptions also include clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people who are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. Staff in this category will also work from home where possible.

The DfE also state that, 'The majority of staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others'. We have though ordered some PPE for intimate care and first aid. We will continue to monitor and send home any staff or pupils who present with a temperature and/or a new continuous cough whilst in school. We will also continue to reinforce the importance of effective hand washing on a regular basis, covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue and disposing of it and not touching eyes/nose/mouth with unwashed hands.

We have created a survey regarding children who are expected to return to school on June 1<sup>st</sup> which we would urge all of you to complete by Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May. In order to fulfil our safeguarding duties, if you indicate that your child will be returning to school in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 they will need to be in school every day from June 1<sup>st</sup> unless they are poorly. This is different to the Keyworkers' system we currently have in place. Please follow the link below:

<https://forms.gle/PvDGHusUVeAefhbW6>

This link can also be found via the school websites and the school Facebook pages.

I hope this reassures you that we are working hard to open our schools as directed by the government and to keep our children and staff safe. I will contact you next week with more details for June 1<sup>st</sup>, unless the government direct us otherwise in the meantime. Currently we have been told we would get at least 48 hours' notice if we are not to return.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Sarah Moore  
Executive Headteacher