



Telford Infant School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

UPDATE - SCHOOL PHASED REOPENING

I hope that all our Telford Infant families are keeping safe and well.

Over the last fortnight the school staff have worked extremely hard to achieve a successful start to the phased reopening of Telford Infant School. The number of keyworker parents requesting school places has increased significantly and on 1st June we opened two Keyworker bubbles to accommodate all the children requiring a place, both of which are now almost full. From 8th June we also welcomed back many of our Reception children, in small groups on a rota basis, and this has gone very smoothly so far. Thank you to all the parents who have brought their child back for being so respectful of the new systems we have implemented. We do of course understand the decision of Reception parents who do not feel that it is right for their child to return to school yet.

We are now looking ahead to refine and develop our systems to enable us to safely extend the opening further.

Next steps

Firstly we need to ensure that the school has the capacity to provide for keyworker families and vulnerable children. The government guidance is very clear that the provision for these groups of children remains the priority for all schools and is now encouraging these children to attend full time. So in order for us to plan our next phase of reopening it would be extremely helpful if you are a keyworker and are likely to require a place for your child but have **not** yet signed up with us that you email the school by close of day Monday 15th June so that we can reserve a space for you. The government's definition of key/critical worker can be found by following the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Once we have this information we will be able to determine how we might extend provision to Year 1 children, as outlined in the government and Local Authority guidance. This will not be a straight forward task as introducing more children back into school will inevitably cause further logistical challenges that will need to be solved in order for the school to comply with our Risk Assessment.

Should the numbers of keyworker children requiring provision increase substantially then we would need to relook at how we can safely accommodate Year 1 children within the remaining space in school and with our very limited numbers of available staff. I am sorry that we cannot be more specific at this point but we are aiming to have a plan to share with you next Thursday, 18th June. We need to continue in small, considered steps to ensure we can make the return for the children, staff and parents as safe as it can be under the circumstances – and safety will continue to be the main priority going forward.

Update for Year 2

You may be aware that Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education, made an announcement in Parliament on Tuesday stating that the government's ambition for all primary pupils to return to school for a month before the summer break has now been dropped.

As an Infant school we are bitterly disappointed that Year 2 children were not in the year groups that schools were asked to prioritise in terms of phased reopening. The guidance has not changed in terms of the protective measures we have to put in place to reopen and I am incredibly sad to have to confirm that it is now logistically impossible for us to be in a position to welcome back our Year 2 children. In order to follow the social distancing measures required to accommodate all children we would need to double the number of classrooms we have in school as well as more than double the number of staff bearing in mind that several of our staff are shielding or facing stringent social distancing requirements.

I understand that for many of our Year 2 children and parents not having an opportunity to return to Telford Infants will bring a range of emotions and I can't begin to tell you how disappointed the Telford Infant team are feeling. Our Year 2 children are an extremely important part of our school community and will continue to be so. I am in frequent contact with Mr Siviter and the Year 2 team are working with our colleagues at Telford Junior School to ensure as smooth a transition as possible for the children moving on there. If there is anything we can do to work with schools that other children will be attending from September please do let us know. Virtual learning and Tapestry will of course continue to the very end of term. We will also look into the possibility of a 'reunion' in the Autumn term but this will be dependent on whether social distancing is still in place and whether the shielding rules for our current Year 2 staff allow them to return to school.

September 2020

I have started to turn my attention to the new academic year and thinking about what Telford Infants might look like in the longer term. At yesterday evening's Coronavirus briefing the Prime Minister announced that the government 'fully intends to get all pupils back by September if the science and battle against the disease allows it'. We are therefore no clearer at this point of what the expectations will be on schools in September but continue to stay tuned into the government guidance.

I have been overwhelmed by your support at this time. Whether or not you have chosen to send your child back to school or whether or not your child has the opportunity to now return – I would like to thank you for being so kind and supportive of the school in the very difficult decisions we are having to make.

The day when it is safe for all our children to return to school together cannot come soon enough.

Yours sincerely,

SA Oustayiannis

Mrs SA Oustayiannis
Headteacher

