

St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

Head Teacher Mrs M T Forrest Phone: 0151 477 8590

Tithebarn Road, Knowsley Village L34 0HA

www.stjohnfisherprimary.co.uk

@stjohnfisherkv



Friday, 15th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your families are still well and healthy and the children are all still smiling.

Schools reopening

The focus of my letter this week is regarding the government announcement last Sunday about schools reopening in June. Throughout this week, there has been a large amount of guidance from the DFE which we, as a school, have been trying to use in order to come up with a safe plan to reopen to the year groups suggested. Government guidance may change again over the next few days and we may have to rethink plans again. Knowsley Council have issued the following statement:

'The top priority is for schools to re-open **safely** rather than **quickly**, or on any given day.' The full article can be found by following this link: <https://www.knowsleynews.co.uk/reopening-schools-in-knowsley/>

Priority Groups

The government have made it clear that we should prioritise children in the following order:

1. Children of key workers and vulnerable children
2. Nursery
3. Reception
4. Year 1
5. Year 6

I will be sending all parents a link on Sunday to a survey in order to ascertain how many of you intend to send your children back into school when we reopen after half term on 8th June.

Group 1- Children of key workers and vulnerable children

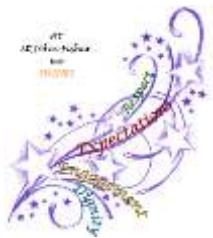
As you can see, priority group 1 are key workers and vulnerable children. Potentially, at least half of our children fall into this category. If all children in this category wished to return, I would be unable to offer places to any other year groups. I may also need to prioritise need in this group with the first places given to families who have 2 critical key worker parents. These children would attend school every day and remain in a mixed age group. After I have a definite number of children in this group, I will then look at need in Nursery and move to other year groups.

Group 2 - 5

Although the government guidance states 15 children to a room, I do not feel that this is in any way safe, for our youngest children. Therefore, year groups will be split so that we can have smaller numbers in each room and staff will be able to work on a much more individual level and support your children

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safely. This means that not all children in each year group will be able to come into school at the same time and will not be in every day.

You should be aware that because we need to reduce contact between groups, children cannot move between the key worker group and their own year group. Please consider this when you make your decisions.

Staggered Starts and Wrap-Around Care

As children must remain in their own group, including teachers and teaching assistants, will be unable to offer Breakfast Club and After School Club to any of our children. We will also need to have staggered start and finish times for each group to minimise contact on the playground and car park. More detail around this will be communicated once we know numbers of children attending.

Non-Attendance

If you decide not to send your child back to school, there will be no penalty and we will endeavour to continue setting home learning.

Health and Safety

Whenever and however we reopen, we will do our very best to keep your children safe and we have numerous dynamic risk assessments and procedures to help us to do this. While we will do our utmost to ensure the children remain in small groups, wash their hands regularly and have staff cleaning the classrooms and equipment throughout the day, I cannot promise that they will always remain 2 metres apart and not touch something that another child has touched before we can clean it. Children need to see their friends, play and laugh together and I feel it would be cruel to force them to stay apart and remiss of me to say otherwise.

I appreciate that this is a lot of information to take in and I understand that you may have lots of questions. I will aim to give you more details about our plans next week and will be available if you wish to call school.

Thank you for all of the support you have shown our school over the past weeks. We are so lucky to have such a wonderful school community who work together and appreciate each other.

Kindest regards,

Mrs Forrest

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