

Dear parents,

Firstly I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your understanding and cooperation since school closed to the majority of children on Friday 20th March. I am aware of the difficulties many of you have faced during this time and of the many challenges in supporting your children's learning at home. As I have said previously, your support, kind words and encouragement have meant a lot to us all while we have been apart.

On May 28th May, the Government confirmed that schools should, if possible, reopen for the priority year groups as identified by the DfE - Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, The Government also stated that their ambition was that other year groups would also start school, so that all pupils return to school a month before the end of the term.

- After conducting our risk assessment, I am writing to let you know that the school WILL NOT be able to open for Year 1 children
- We will also not be able to open for Nursery, Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 before the summer holidays.

I completely understand how incredibly disappointing this will be for you and the children.

Every school has had to produce their own risk assessment and determine how to organise the return to school provision, based on the school building, staffing and safety requirements. Some schools have decided not to reopen, others have opened to Nursery and Reception children, others to only Year 6 children, others have decided to just continue to support the Keyworker Provision. You may be aware of other schools reopening in a different manner to WP, please be assured that our decision to open to Reception, Year 6 and Keyworker Provision has been based on a rigorous and thorough analysis and assessment of risk.

Our risk assessment is a live working document and is available to view on the website [link](#). It highlights the complexities and difficulties we have faced in trying to ensure that if we reopen to a wider group of pupils, we can strictly adhere to the Government guidance and ensure we have done everything possible to make sure the school environment is as safe as possible for children and adults.

The Government guidance was detailed and included children being taught in smaller groups or 'bubbles' with a maximum of 15 children in each. Each child had to have their own workstation within the classroom to ensure that 2 metre social distancing could be observed at all times. Each bubble has to have their own space outside, so that the children do not mix with children in other bubbles and social distancing can be observed. Equipment could not be shared, so all children need their own resource packs. There needs to be a one way system around the school with staggered break and lunch times. Classrooms and toilets need to be cleaned in the middle of the day as well as in the morning and after school. The DfE also recommended against a part time or rota offer. All of the above had to be considered in line with staff (teachers, TAs, office and cleaning) availability and the spaces in the building.

We had a very high uptake for the Reception return, with over 70% of Reception parents deciding to send their child back to school this week. To open our Reception bubbles, we needed one teacher and one TA per class, with an additional TA per class for breaks and to support at lunchtimes. That is

12 adults, four classrooms and four outside spaces. Also, the cleaning requirements require additional cleaning staff to provide ensure that classrooms are cleaned throughout the day. This simply cannot be replicated for each year group, it is not possible.

In addition, the Keyworker Provision has increased 50% since we came back after half term, which has meant that we have the Years 1,2 and 3 Keyworker children on the roof space and the Years 4,5 and 6 children on the middle floor. This has needed increased staffing and additional space.

I know that we all want to see every single pupil back at school, but the safety of all of our children and staff and our whole school community is paramount to me and this has to be the basis of any decision I make.

The year groups who are not in school will continue to be provided with work on GC and we are looking at how the children and teachers can say goodbye to each other before the end of term. We are finalising the details this week and I hope to share the plans with you very soon.

I fully understand how difficult it is for our children and for all of us to not have the normality of school, as we have always known it. We are missing you all very much and my whole staff team joins me in wishing you and your family safety and good health. We are still don't know how school will operate in September, but unless the current situation changes dramatically, it may be a blended model of part time schooling for all, together with home learning. We are waiting for further clarification from the DfE and local authority and I will continue to keep you informed.

Hopefully it will not be too much longer before we are all back together at WP again.

Best wishes
Karen

