

**Saint Edmund’s and Saint Thomas’**

**Catholic Primary School**

**Oxford Road, Waterloo L22 8QF**

**Tel 0151 928 5586 Fax 0151 928 4352**

 

15th May 2020

Dear Parents,

**CORONA VIRUS UPDATE 12**

**Update Phased Reopening of Schools**

As you may recall, schools were anticipating clear guidance from the Department for Education over the last five days and indeed we have received several documents with suggestions and actions to commence a phased reopening with smaller class sizes, staggered opening times and comprehensive risks assessments.

At a regional level and national level many questions have been asked around the scientific evidence of child transmission rates and how the current infection rate can be reconciled with schools planning a reopening in two weeks’ time.

After giving significant thought to planning, the most recent government guidance has resulted in schools having to rethink / review initial plans, an example of this was a managed transition process worked out between primary and secondaries locally has now been cancelled due to guidance last night.

The purpose of my letter to you is to emphasize that the government’s proposal for reopening is phased **from** 1st June 2020, not necessarily, **on** 1st June 2020. Furthermore, I have to think about what your intention is for your child in terms of them returning to school. I would like to gain some sort of insight into the numbers we could expect if the proposal is not changed and therefore, I have attached a quick questionnaire for you to assist us in our planning. If you are a key worker who has not taken up a place during partial closure please note this on the questionnaire. I also wish to share with you the things we have to consider in advance of reopening to other children beyond our key worker and vulnerable groups.

The eighteen years in which I have been a Headteacher, managing social distancing for pupils in school will be, without doubt, the greatest challenge and I know that the staff will do everything in their power, when the time comes, to ensure that safety and management of risk precedes everything else that we do with your children. Activities such as a regular regime of cleaning of frequently touched surfaces, careful consideration of resource usage in the early years; some play

activities which involve frequent manual contact may be suspended. We have to consider when and where deep cleaning will need to be carried out so it could be that we are open to children Monday to Thursday but closed to ALL children on a Friday to enable this to happen. Although class sizes are proposed to be reduced to fifteen this depends on factors such as the number of staff available to us, our unique accommodation with all its limits and restraints. In terms of government guidance, *one size does* ***not*** *fit all*! It may well be that classes are organised in a lower grouping with smaller children to adult ratios. I think, too, that we cannot begin to imagine a full curriculum being taught whenever phased reopening starts as there are so many factors which impact on our provision. This needs to be stated now to manage everybody’s expectation. Priorities in the first instance will be social and mental well-being for all pupils on re-entry into school. We know how critical this has been to generations of our Early Years cohorts and given the disruption to our children’s primary education, this will be our starting point.

You will be very aware of the stance Liverpool Local Authority have taken and we are all in the midst of very intense debate between unions, professional associations and the government which could impact on a change of date or some sort of variation for phased reopening. It is the school’s governing body who will ultimately determine when the school is safe to open to limited numbers and whilst everybody is willing a return to a safe school environment, all school stakeholders: parents, governors and staff have a moral duty to question these proposals as we continue to protect our three hundred and forty four 3-11 year olds.

I hope that we will be able to present you with a plan next week, *guidance* permitting and some resolution in the current political / health debate.

May I thank you in the meantime for everything that you have done with the children and hope you and your families continue to stay safe and well.

Yours sincerely,



Kieran A Loftus Headteacher



**PROPOSED SCHOOL REOPENING QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN IN NURSERY, RECEPTION, YEAR 1 AND YEAR 6**

**Child’s Name ………………………………………….. Year Group ………………………………………………**

**Teacher ……………………………………………… Parents ……………………………………………………..**

1. **Given what you know currently with information provided by the government, do you intend for your child to return to school from the beginning of June?**
* **YES**
* **NO**
* **MAYBE**
1. **What other information would you wish to know prior to sending your child back to school?**
* **Hygiene information -additional precautions**
* **Information about the curriculum**
* **Information about picking up and dropping off**
* **Information about class sizes**
1. **Are there any other concerns which you may have which could assist us in the planning process for a phased reopening?**
* **YES**
* **NO**
* **If you have ticked yes, please outline your concern as it could be very helpful to us in our planning process**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………...**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**PLEASE RETURN BY Tuesday 19th May 2020**

**Please send all responses to :** **admin.stedmundsandstthomas@schools.sefton.gov.uk**