



PEEL COMMON *Community Junior School*

The Drive ♦ Gosport ♦ Hampshire ♦ PO13 0QD
Telephone (01329) 281206 ♦ Fax (01329) 230811
Website ♦ www.peelcommonjuniorschool.co.uk

Headteacher : Mr Andy Clarke
Deputy Headteacher : Mr Warren Beadell
Administrative Officer : Mrs Tracy Barker

14th May 2020

Dear Year 6 Parents/carers,

I hope you are all keeping well, are staying safe and making the best of the current situation. I apologise for writing to you at length but before putting out a survey, I feel you need to know a few facts and what school will be like for your child should you decide to send them back at the time we open for more children – it is YOUR choice and there will be NO penalties for non- attendance. School will not be school as you know it. I just feel I need to be totally open and honest with you.

You will have heard the government's plans to begin to phase in the opening of schools from – at the earliest – 1st June. Given the level of planning and changes to the school environment that need to be put in place in order to reduce the risk of infection to staff, children and you at home, we may not be in a position to open on June 1st, even if the Government advice says that we are able to do so. The phased return applies to Year 6 only (Reception and Year 1 also).

No plans were communicated to us prior to the government's announcement on Sunday and they have been dripping in slowly this week. The plans so far include, splitting children up into small teaching groups (referred to as a 'bubble' – same adult and same children at all times), staggered starts to the day and staggered finish times to avoid congestion at the school gates and one adult only dropping off and collecting. We are being asked to clean surfaces continuously throughout the day, wear PPE for First Aid when a child is displaying symptoms and where we can't keep a 2m distance and set out classrooms for social distancing, avoiding contact with children and between children. I can tell you quite honestly that there is no such thing as social distancing in a school – we can try but we certainly cannot guarantee it.

Do I want the children and staff all back in school? Of course I do. Are you at the end of your tether at home? Quite likely. However, I am not going to write and tell you we can achieve social distancing and guarantee total safety in a school. We can always make things safer, we could perhaps reduce the risk slightly but as soon as lots of children return, I can tell you that the risk will be there.

School will be a very different place – certainly this side of the summer holidays.

Children will be sorted into what the government is calling 'bubbles' – meaning they will be with up to 14 other children (this needs to be risk assessed and it may be that this is a much lower number) and an adult within a classroom setting. The class teacher can only be in one 'bubble' and the 'bubbles' cannot mix at all. We would decide on the 'bubbles' - not all children would be with their friends and in any case they will have to try to remain at least 2 metres from others. This is necessary so that any outbreak of the virus can be tracked and traced and those people who have been in the affected 'bubble' can isolate and be tested.



Furniture will have to be removed from classes, a traffic system installed and systems for use of toilets and cleaning all worked out. Lunches will be eaten in 'bubbles' in the classrooms and will have to be a school or home packed lunch. We need PPE for First Aid – which we will have to source before we can safely open to accommodate a child who may present with symptoms during the school day. Desks will be 2 metres apart and children will be encouraged to remain at their desks and keep to their own equipment. The days will seem long for them and we may decide to shorten them.

I will be sending out a survey to parents/carers of children in Year 6 to find out how many of you would want to send your children back and the first question will be have you read this first. That is important because I wouldn't want you to think that your children are missing school, their friends and normality – as we all are - and so just decide on that alone to send them back. School will NOT be school in that sense and lunch times and break times, class times and the teaching staff will all likely be different. **IT WILL NOT BE NORMAL.** They will not be playing tag in the playground and being in close contact with others.

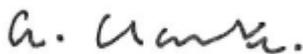
We will endeavour to make the experience as positive as possible and recognise that children will be anxious – small groups will help with this. It might be that we ask children to attend for part of the week so that we can deep clean at regular intervals. I hope you can understand the level of difficulty this all gives but it is vital so that we can at least try to minimise the risks. Teachers will also have to continue providing work for the rest of the school.

Please look out for the survey and respond as soon as possible. The numbers who want to return are needed before we can plan further, the keyworker/vulnerable group will remain as it is. I also need to be clear that it is **ONLY** Year 6 being considered at this moment – if you have children in other years they **CANNOT** return at this phase.

I am sorry to be so blunt in what I have described, but as a parent myself, I would want to know exactly what it will look like. Should you decide that you wish for your child to stay at home, that is absolutely fine and I assure you I will totally understand and respect that.

Thank you for the time you have given to reading this – I appreciate that it is a difficult decision to decide what to do with your most precious of gifts – your children.

Take care and stay safe



Mr A Clarke
Headteacher