

**Crayke Church of England Primary School**

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 **Headteacher – Mrs Judi Jackson**

Thursday 15 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

**School Opening - Update**

You may have wondered why it’s been a bit quieter than usual on the website this week! Sunday’s announcement that schools should reopen for pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 and the accompanying guidance that was issued on Monday has taken some digesting by us in school and I am sure by you as parents and carers too.

The process of reopening is not something that we are taking lightly and already many hours of reading, discussion and planning has been going on. The key points from the DfE are summarised for your information at the end of this letter.

This guidance clearly renders it impossible for school to operate as it did before closure. For example, we may be in a position to only open for some pupils at the beginning of the first week back and to gradually build up for children in other year groups during the week. A staggered start and end to the day will undoubtedly have implications for your working days. We may not be able to open to all children all day every day. We will, however, make our best endeavours to ensure continued provision for children of keyworker parents.

We may deem it safer to only provide a packed lunch for children, rather than a hot meal, as our much loved family service style dining simply won’t be possible in the current climate. Children will remain in their class groupings and will not be able to socialise with children from other groups. Playtimes and lunchtimes will be staggered, and the playground “zoned” to ensure we can adhere to social distancing as best as we possibly can. We will certainly be insisting on no parking in or around the school building to reduce congestion and to allow for staff parking. We would ask you to use the Sports Hall, as we aim to zone the staff car park for the safest possible way to collect your child. As parents, only one of you will be able to drop off or collect your child and it will not be possible for you to enter the school building at any time.

We just wanted to take this opportunity to reassure you that every waking moment (including many during the night!) is currently dedicated to trying to plan and pre-empt situations and to plan solutions. The whole staff team have been amazing in their support and I couldn’t be more grateful. This is not the job they signed up for but they have embraced every change with stoicism and enthusiasm and we all are determined to do the best that we can in these circumstances. We know that you will have lots of questions and, indeed, that this letter may raise more questions than it answers. I am aiming to provide a more comprehensive document for you by next Tuesday at the latest which outlines Crayke’s approach. Please bear with us as we take our time to ensure a considered, balanced plan for the coming weeks. The safety and wellbeing of your children and the staff are our prime concern.

We would also like to reassure parents of children in Years 2 – 5, as well as those parents who choose not to send their children back to school at this time, that we have not forgotten about you! Home learning packs will continue to be uploaded onto the website weekly for you to access, continuing with a whole school weekly theme. Teachers will also continue to upload one 2Do per week for children in Years 2 – 5 although there may be slight differences in the time taken to respond to these as they will all now be busy teaching and working in school or from home every day.

Finally, I would like to say that I understand that you are faced with very difficult decisions in the weeks ahead and that your children may also be experiencing a range of emotions and feelings previously unknown to them too. Siblings in other year groups may feel upset that they are not allowed to go back to school when their brother or sister is (or vice versa!). You as parents may have mixed feelings about whether you would like your child to return or not. You may be in the position where you do not want your child to come back to school but are faced with no alternative. We understand. If you are uncertain and you would like the opportunity to discuss your concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be happy to talk to you.

We have been so grateful for all of your support over the past two months – it really means a lot to us all.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Judi Jackson Mr Hugh Porter

Headteacher Chair of Governors

**DfE guidance summary of key points**

* *From the week commencing 1 June at the earliest, we will be asking primary schools to welcome back children in nursery, reception, year 1 and year 6, alongside priority groups.*
* *The three year groups within mainstream primary have been prioritised because they are key transition years – children in Reception and year 1 are at the very beginning of their school career and are mastering the essential basics, including counting and the fundamentals of reading and writing, and learning to socialise with their peers. We know that attending early education lays the foundation for lifelong learning and supports children’s social and emotional development. Year 6 children are finishing Key Stage 2 and are preparing for the transition to secondary school, and will benefit immensely from time with their friends and teachers to ensure they are ready.*
* *Our ambition is to bring all primary year groups back to school before the summer holidays, for a month if feasible, though this will be kept under review. We will only welcome back additional year groups if the most up-to-date assessment of the risk posed by the virus indicates it is appropriate to have larger numbers of children within schools. The safety of children and staff is our utmost priority.*
* *The majority of staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others.*
* *We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff.*
* *For primary schools, classes should normally be split in half, with no more than 15 pupils per small group and one teacher (and, if needed, a teaching assistant). If there are any shortages of teachers, then teaching assistants can be allocated to lead a group, working under the direction of a teacher. Vulnerable children and children of critical workers in other year groups should also be split into small groups of no more than 15. Desks should be spaced as far apart as possible.*
* *Stagger break times (including lunch), so that all children are not moving around the school at the same time.*
* *Stagger drop-off and collection times.*