

Flixton Primary School

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Headteacher: Mr J Redmond

Thursday 9th July

Dear Parents,

I hope you and your families are all well and staying safe. The last week has been particularly busy in school, as we have been working through the Government's guidance to enable a full opening of FPS in September. We are completing updated Risk Assessments, and have considered very carefully how we can manage the full opening to ensure the safe and happy return of all our pupils.

We have learned a lot through the implementation of our Wider Opening Plan and are confident in our ability to create a safe environment where the risk to the school community is significantly reduced and managed effectively. We have also seen the considerable benefit of children returning to familiarity – their own classrooms and their own teachers, and these observations and experiences have helped to shape our plans for September.

I am very aware of the disruption to all of our lives that we have endured over the last few months, and I am hopeful that children returning to school will provide a sense of normality that will benefit us all. I have to be mindful, however, that a very large number of our children will not have attended school since mid-March, and for them (and perhaps some who have attended, but as children of Key Workers), the thought of September causes worry and upset. I have always prioritised the welfare of the school community in all the decisions I have taken, and I will continue to do so.

With this in mind, there will be some changes to what might normally be expected to happen in September. In order to give our children the best possible chance of a smooth re-entry to school, I have made some decisions that I feel will allow us to rise to the challenge of bringing children back into a school environment after a long period of absence both safely and happily. This includes some decisions that will temporarily inconvenience parents, and for that I apologise, but I would not ask you to support these decisions if I did not strongly believe they were absolutely the right thing to do for our children.

School will open for all existing pupils (current Nursery to current Year 5) on Wednesday 2nd September. This is one day earlier than previously published. On Wednesday 2nd, children will return to what they know – they will be in their 'old' classes taught, where possible, by the teacher who was teaching them in March. In essence, we are aiming to create a window of familiarity and normality that will, I believe, help our children immeasurably.

By returning to the familiar, children will be taught by teachers who know them well, who can quickly identify issues because of that knowledge, and all children be given the opportunity to re-establish themselves in a school setting. Being with familiar

teachers will also help children to become comfortable with the 'new normal' routines in school. They will be in school uniform, and as much as we are able to, it will be school as they remember it from March. All children will remain in the 'old' classes for the first two weeks of September, allowing us time to settle them and to prepare them for the transition to new classes and new teachers.

School will then be closed on Monday 14th September and Tuesday 15th September. When we re-open on Wednesday 16th September, children will be welcomed into their new classes by new teachers, and the academic year will begin for them. We hope that the initial two week 'mini-term' will have had its desired effect, and that children will be excited and ready for their new class.

Our new Reception and Nursery intake will begin their transition into FPS from Wednesday 16th September.

I am confident that this plan, although it will cause some inconvenience for parents over the first two weeks in September, will enable us to quickly and effectively establish routines and expectations, and help minimise the impact on children of a long period outside formal education. The long term benefits of the returning to the familiar for our existing children, and holding off transition for our new children, will make the implementation of this plan worth the unusual first two weeks.

I will be in touch soon with the 'nuts and bolts' of the practical arrangements around start and finishing times, entrances and exits, and routines such as lunchtimes. I am hopeful that the plan we have in place will allow us to open in September and ensure a happy and safe return for our children. I once again thank you for your support, your patience and your good wishes.

With best wishes



Mr Redmond

