

15th June 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to clarify a few points with regard to the information that was sent out last week via Tapestry and in the newsletter as there seems to be a little confusion about what we are able to offer. I apologise if this was not clear in the original letter.

We are now at capacity in school (other than 2 spaces in year 1) in terms of the number of pupils we can safely have in and continue to comply with government guidance. We are using every room and every member of staff to cater for the children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1, Year 6, where parents have requested places, and the three groups of key worker children. Sadly, we will not be able to go beyond the numbers that have been set. If we had had requests for more places when we set up our provision before half term we would have possibly arranged it in a different way. However, this is now not possible. I appreciate that as parents/carers you have made difficult decisions about whether to send your child back or not - as we have had to make difficult decisions about how we organise the school to meet the demand for places and the expectations of the government. I am very proud that we have been able to open as fully as we have done and welcome back so many children whilst complying with the guidance. I know many other schools have not been in a position, due to layout, space and staffing levels, to offer as many places as we have been able to.

I know that some of you were hoping to send your child back for the last 4 weeks, when the government said that they hoped that schools would be able to open more widely for the whole of the primary school. Unfortunately, due to the logistics for this to happen in most schools, whilst still adhering to the strict guidance, this has not been possible and the government have changed its course of action. This may have left you in a position where you may have chosen to send your child back some time over the next few weeks but are now not able to do so. I have tried to reiterate in the last two newsletters that the demand for spaces was increasing and that the school only has a certain capacity so that you had all the information to make decisions about bringing your child back in. It now means that, sadly, we will have to turn down requests for further places. This is not a situation we are happy with or would have chosen but it is as it is.

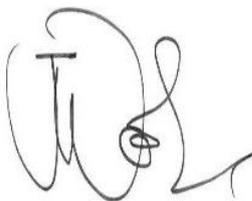
We wanted to give those children in years 2 – 5 the opportunity to come back in to school – even if this is very brief - as they have had no choice up until this point. In order to do this, we need to use the classes currently being used by Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 and the staff who are working in these classes. This is why Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 have been told that their term will finish for them on Friday 10th July. We have to continue to provide key worker places (although we can no longer support any more key workers' children due to places having been taken) and, therefore, this will mean that all class bases and staff will be reallocated during this last week. Please be aware that we will only be able to offer 2 days at the most in that last week to Years 2 – 5 as we can only take half a class at a time.

We mentioned that we would offer an opportunity for those pupils in school to meet their new teacher before they finish. Please be aware that this is by no means the normal transition days that we have. It will be a quick hello followed by a max of 15 minutes of Q and A at an appropriate socially distanced space, so that we can preserve bubbles. I realise that some of you are unhappy that your child in Years R and 1 will not have this opportunity as you have not chosen for them to come back to school and now there is not the capacity to do so. We are currently looking at a way that we can invite these children in for about 30 minutes during that last week, so that they have an opportunity to see their new teacher, if you feel that this would be of some benefit. We will give you further information about our plans for this by the end of this week. Additionally, the class teachers will do a video for their new children. None of this is ideal but, unfortunately, we have tried to do the best we can with the requests we have received and the resources we have.

In terms of next year's classes and teachers, we will let you know when the children find out during those last two weeks of term. We are considering the make-up of each class and, as I said, this will be decided on by taking into account a number of factors. We will not keep the classes exactly as they are now as we need to address any imbalances (based on the factors described in the previous letter) that we have seen during the year. However, we will always be sure to put your child with someone we believe they will be happy with. We are also really mindful that many children have had a long time out of school. We appreciate that some will be anxious about coming back to school in a new class and there may be 'gaps' in their learning. We are already looking at how we adapt the learning spaces and curriculum to meet these needs and this will be a key priority next year. As ever, your positivity and enthusiasm for school will go a long way to reassuring your child.

I hope that this goes some way to clarifying the answers to some of the questions raised.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Woakes', written in a cursive style.

Jane Woakes