



28th May 2020

Wider opening of schools – 1st June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I wrote to you last week and staff visited to discuss the provision for your child from Monday 1st June 2020. Some of you agreed that your child would be safer and better suited to stay at home and receive support from school. Others requested that some provision was provided in school in addition to support at home. This plan was agreed based on staff levels and physical space that considered the safety of all concerned. I thank you for your input and support during this process and look forward to developing our offer further in the coming weeks.

On Wednesday 27th May, all schools in Lancashire received a statement that suggested that schools do not open to the wider community from 1st June due to a number of concerns. You can view Dr Sakthi Karunathini (Director of Public Health and Wellbeing) over the page.

I believe that Brookfield School is prepared to welcome back the small number of pupils that requested some 'in school' support and do not see any reason to change this plan. However, I would ask parents/carers to assess their own family circumstances and decide whether you still want the provision. Please notify the person assigned to collect your child on Monday or Tuesday what your preference is.

For those families who opted to stay at home and those on our bespoke provision, the plans will remain unchanged apart from the collecting of work which will be delayed until guidance suggests it is safe to do so.

Communication via telephone will continue and we envisage some disruption during the first week after half term but we will make every effort to get on top of the situation as soon as possible. Your understanding and patience is appreciated during uncertain times.

This situation is being monitored very closely and I would urge ALL parents and carers to send their email details to staysafe@brookfieldschool.co.uk so that a daily update email can be sent. Due to the administration involved in sending out letters, the frequency of current updates and delays in postage, emails are the only way to communicate currently. If you do not have access to email, please call school to request telephone contact. This will be the last communication using letter format and will be replaced by email.

In summary, ALL plans made last week will remain exactly the same unless parents opt to keep their child at home after reading and understanding the guidance from LCC. Future contact will be made via email and it is parents/carers responsibility to provide suitable contact details.

Regards

Rob Brocklebank – Headteacher

Local assessment of the wider opening of schools – 1st June 2020

The government's five tests are outlined below:

- Protect the NHS's ability to cope. We must be confident that we are able to provide sufficient critical care and specialist treatment right across the UK.
- See a sustained and consistent fall in the daily death rates from Covid-19 so we are confident that we have moved beyond the peak
- See that the rate of infection is decreasing to manageable levels across the board, although we don't see the results of all tests in a timely manner. In addition, we are starting to see social distancing not being followed everywhere across the county which poses the risk of new cases to rise.
- Be confident that the range of operational challenges, including testing capacity and PPE, are in hand, with supply able to meet future demand.
- Be confident that any adjustments to the current measures will not risk a second peak of infections that overwhelms the NHS.

Locally, we are currently able to meet the requirements of the first three tests; however, we do not meet the requirements for the final two tests. The test and trace programme is not at a state of readiness to respond to Covid-19 community setting outbreaks in a timely manner, which poses a risk to school environments. Furthermore, we are not confident that adjustments to the current measures of the lockdown policy will not risk a second peak of infections locally.

Consequently, our advice to schools is to not re-open to more pupils on June 1st, but to continue with their current support systems that are in place. The safety and wellbeing of children, their families, and school staff outweigh the benefits of opening schools of 1st June.

The key information supporting this advice is that:

- The current support system in schools for children of key workers and valuable children, which is how we describe our vulnerable children, is sufficient at this time. Additionally, safeguards are in place in Lancashire to support those children who are at risk in the community, and this support will continue.
- There has been no evidence of education outcomes worsening due to the effects of government lockdown policy.
- It is not going to be possible to implement social distancing in early years school settings.
- There is currently no evidence of widespread immunity in community settings.
- There is a significant risk that should outbreaks occur in school settings, the current system will not allow for tests to be conducted in a timely manner and therefore, the virus will continue to spread.

Schools will be kept well informed on a regular basis from the Director for Public Health in Lancashire and Lancashire County Council. We will regularly review the situation and provide further advice so that schools can re-open as soon as it is safe to do so.

In this challenging time, we recommend that everyone continue to follow the government advice of staying alert by:

- Staying at home as much as possible.
- Working from home if you can.
- Limit contact with other people.
- Keep a 2m distance from other people.
- Wash your hands regularly.

Dr Sakthi Karunathini

Director of Public Health and Wellbeing

Lancashire County Council