

19<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and our wonderful pupils.

I cannot believe we are in week 9 of school closure, to almost all staff and pupils. I appreciate that life is extremely tough for us all, therefore we must stick together to support each other.

If you follow our twitter or access the website, you will see we have been very busy in school offering places for identified children. Staff have worked hard to ensure learning and a bit of fun continues!

I must say a huge, huge thank you to all our staff for their positive attitudes and hard work to ensure that our pupils are supported: online daily learning that is supported, marked and fed back, packs for those who do not have appropriate access to online learning, phone calls, postcards, delivery of FSM/ vouchers/ packs and continuous access to the office. All when many also are home educating their own children, or acting as carers/ support for family members.

We have also been trying to support our local community through 'Acts of Kindness': Raising a flag dedicated to our NHS, making a rainbow, sharing our 'rainbow dream catches' with Sunderland Royal hospital, Holy Cross Care Home, local residents, hanging rainbows and beautiful tags with thoughtful messages on the school fence, dropping off extra goodies and food parcels to our families. We want to stay positive, care and support where we can.

Many staff said they felt very emotional when making those first phone calls. We miss our children, routines, friendships like everyone else and cannot wait to get back to normal...whatever normal is.

I believe it will be a long, long time until we get back to normal and as a Head Teacher, a mam and daughter I want to ensure that the health and safety of our staff and pupils is our top priority at all times.

The governments **ambition** is to **gradually** re-open school. RAPS will take the flexibility the government has offered, to plan for re-opening in a very slow, measured and controlled way. Therefore, I wish to clarify school will not be opening w.c. 1<sup>st</sup> or the 8<sup>th</sup> June.

**When we do intend opening** we will inform those year groups of our intention: **Y6**, **Y1** followed later by **R**. This initially would only be on a PT basis, in small groups. At each step we will be evaluating, readjusting, staying static with our plans or moving forward...at our own pace.

Parents in the appropriate year groups will be consulted as to whether your child will initially be attending school, staying at home or maybe join at a slightly later date, (see text message and website).

I do appreciate your concerns, but I have been as open and honest with you as I can. The situation is changing daily and I will be prepared to alter plans if this is in the best interests of staff and pupils.

We are currently putting plans in place to return, having received a significant amount of advice from The Government, Sunderland Together for Children, Health and Safety together with a lot of common sense. In order to improve communication, I am asking all parents to PLEASE PROVIDE US WITH AN E-MAIL ADDRESS. Send to the above e-mail, text, ring.

I understand, as a mam of two children that many families are finding lockdown extremely difficult. Apart from the significant impact upon children's learning and possible future, there is the emotional stress, anxiety both for children and parents. Financial impact upon families, many already struggling. I know you will be asking yourself what is the right thing to do and many families will have conflicting answers. So I reiterate what I said earlier, the health and safety of our staff and pupils is our top priority at all times.

I am in school most days, if anyone wishes to contact me.

Stay calm, stay safe and take care...but also please, please, please keep going with your learning it is so, so important for your future!!

Yours sincerely



Mrs K L Todd  
Head Teacher