



Wibsey Primary School
North Road, Bradford, BD6 1RL
Headteacher: Mr N M Cooper

Tuesday 21st May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Update from Mr Cooper – 21st May

Good afternoon everyone

Important Information

We have reached a point where we can start to finalise a plan informing you of the phased way in which we will try to reopen Wibsey Primary School. This comes with lots of caveats and not all the answers. I have given you information as soon as I have had it all the way through this crisis and I will continue to do so. Please understand that this update will not answer all your questions, but my updates next week hopefully will go some way. This is just me sharing as far as we have got, up to today.

You may have seen that Bradford Council are supporting schools to make the decisions for themselves and their communities about reopening. That transfers a lot of the pressure onto us. I said last week when I updated you that the Government proposals to bring in our youngest children were unsafe and unworkable. This applies to other areas of the Government guidance too. As an example of this during our planning at Wibsey we have looked at whether we can maintain social distances of 2m with 15 pupils in a classroom – we can't. We will have to work on a ratio of 1 teacher to 10 children. The Government then said that 2m didn't matter in schools – why on earth not if it matters everywhere else?

When planning we made the decision that to bring in YN and YR and expect them to keep 2m distances was absolutely unworkable. Classrooms will be fairly bare, with children kept at desks, children may not be with friends and will only be able to mix with the 10 children they are put with. This will include outdoor time and eating together in classrooms, all at a 2m distance. Many will not have their own teacher. Clearly this is unsuitable for Foundation pupils – it is going to be hard enough for everyone else. I worry about this.

It would be wrong not to start to try and re-open though. At Wibsey we are hopefully going to open to Year 5 from the 8th June, and children will have slots for 2 whole school days (either Monday and Tuesday or Thursday and Friday). This is the maximum we can do to maintain safe distancing, handwashing etc. On Wednesdays the school will be deep cleaned and teachers will work preparing home learning materials for those not attending and providing pastoral care. We will then look at extending this to Year 1 from the 15th June if everything is working. Any decisions on any other year groups going forward will be taken at a later date.

Childcare will continue – but only for current attendees and **only for the vulnerable and proven key worker parents who meet our criteria**. This will change to mirror how school is running, but without the curriculum work. The times will reduce to 8.45am - 3.30pm as all staff will be in and working the full school day. It will change to children being in groups of 10, in separate rooms, not necessarily with friends/same age children and with the withdrawal of toys and some activities as we have to align with the provision and cleaning regimes in school.

A Booking form will be available from next Wednesday for the Y5 places and childcare families will be contacted. A decision on Year 1 will be taken w/c 8th June.

Some of the messages above are quite stark, but we all have to accept that school as we knew it is over for now. We will do our absolute best to

- 1) Keep your children safe and the staff safe
- 2) Provide as much normality as we can for children – with a particular focus on their mental well-being.
- 3) Provide a limited curriculum for Year 5 as they come back.

But

There is a big but to all of this. The Government are not announcing until the 28th May whether they think it is safe for children to return.

School will not reopen on the 8th to Year 5 **if** we feel the rate of infection in our area/city is unsafe, or indeed additional factors have emerged that make us believe opening would be unsafe to pupils and staff. We may need to push back our plans to initially take in Y5 until the 15th June or later. We are seeking further assurances from Bradford Council that reopening has been considered against public liability cover

I know these unprecedented times have been tough on many of you, and on many of our staff. None of us has known anything like this in our lifetimes. With the best interests of our children at heart of all we do, we are going to try to move forwards. You will have to make your own choices about whether to send your children, but I will send out our risk assessment and other information to help you as much as I can.

Please don't contact school at this point as we cannot provide further information until we send the details to you next week. Risk Assessments and arrangements will be shared with you to help answer your questions.

Stay safe everyone. I will send a separate message to your children at the start of next week. Eid Mubarak to all our families celebrating.

Nigel Cooper

Headteacher – Team Wibsey