



19th May

Dear parents and carers

Here I am again writing a letter that I could never imagine writing. Since the prime minister's announcement just over a week ago, I feel I have been on a rollercoaster! Over the past week, I received numerous lengthy documents full of directions and guidelines, listing what we need to do to fulfil the government's wishes. As you know, I have a growth mind-set and never say something's impossible but I have certainly been set the biggest challenge I have ever faced.

Thank you to the large majority of you that completed our survey; it is really important that we know your views. Firstly, I really appreciate all your positive comments and thanks regarding our home learning provision and the support you have received during lockdown. We barely had a day to put things in place so it's good to hear that this has been effective and helpful.

The immense trust that you place in the Greenfield leadership and staff is overwhelmingly clear. For this reason, I need to make sure you are clearly informed of our situation, against what you might hear on the news or on social media. You asked *lots* of questions about safety measures and what school will be like. I will do my best to answer with great honesty in this letter and in the supplementary FAQ page. I am truly sorry if the responses appear cold, they are merely a reflection of the measures and the reality of the situation we are in. Please also be mindful that, as the government is continually changing and updating its information and any arrangements have to be checked with the local authority, the answers are all subject to change.

A lot of parents were undecided about sending their child back to school from the 1st June and it is hardly surprising. We simply cannot predict what the situation will be in two weeks' time and opening schools to more pupils is dependent on meeting the 5 Key Tests, including the sustained decrease in the number of deaths and the rate of infection decreasing. As we are not there yet, a number of parents have understandably stated that it is too soon to send their child back to school.

A significant number of parents indicated that they were key workers. Although most of these have been able to keep their child at home during the lock down, this may no longer be possible as more people go back to their work place. Just so you are aware, accommodating critical worker's children takes priority above others, regardless of their year group. If all those that indicated were to need a place, it may not be possible to accommodate additional pupils from Reception, Year 1 and Year 6.

Of the parents who would send their child back next month or who are considering it, the overwhelming majority said this is on condition that strict safety measures were adhered to, including strict social distancing. Please be assured that, the safety of our pupils, their parents and our staff is paramount. However, I must point out to you though that the government has clearly stated it does not expect social distancing in schools because they know it is difficult for young children to understand and maintain. In fact, the numbers of pupils the government are suggesting to return and place in one classroom would make it physically impossible. Knowing that strict social distancing is fundamental in your view though, will inform the decisions we make for Greenfield.

Some parents have asked for a guarantee that their child would be safe. We cannot give this guarantee and we cannot guarantee that everyone will adhere to the safety measures that are put in

place. We cannot (in the absence of scientific evidence) even guarantee that the measures are safe enough. All I can say is that we will put measures in place that will hopefully reduce risks and that all school staff would do their best to follow them and encourage and assist pupils and parents to follow them too.

Of the parents who were more certain they would like their child to return, this was often because their child craved normality, missed the school way of life and socialising with their friends. It's understandable – we all miss school and look forward to getting back to normal. However, with the measures that have to be put in place, school will be far removed from the normality you or your child have come to expect. Further details around this are in the FAQ section.

Although I would dearly love it to be so, I cannot imagine that in one month's time there will be no distancing measures in place. Unless this were the case, I do not think any parent would agree to their child being packed back into full classrooms or huddled up together in the hall and on the playground as they were before. Therefore, I think the government's ambitious suggestion that all pupils will be back for a month before the end of the school year to be highly unlikely. I can assure parents who were worried about this that we will continue to do our best for pupils at home as well as those at school. We will continue with our provision for home learning, albeit with some changes as most staff will be in school with pupils.

There are less than two weeks until 1st June and, while we will be preparing for more pupils attending school, this is not confirmed yet. We do not know exactly when the government intends to reach or announce the decision of the '5 tests' being met, although we are told there will be 48 hours' notice. We feel it would be unsafe though to simply flick a switch and open our doors to pupils on the Monday morning after half term.

At present, including for the week commencing 1st June, we will be continuing with the provision for children of key workers. Once the government has confirmed it is safe to open more widely, we will contact parents with more specific and detailed arrangements on our phased return.

Assuring you of our best intentions at all times,

Yours sincerely

Claire Stylianides