



24th June 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

DELAPRE PRIMARY SCHOOL – MOVING FORWARD

On Tuesday 10th June, Gavin Williamson (Education Secretary) announced to parliament that the Government has shelved its plans to open primary schools for all pupils before the end of the summer term. Instead, schools have been asked to try to bring back more pupils before the summer holidays, whilst maintaining the current limitations in place.

We are pleased with how the system we have implemented has gone so far, although it has not been without its challenges.

We managed to offer places to pupils in Reception and Year 6, as well as continuing to offer provision for children of Key Workers, those vulnerable and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). We have also been able to offer this virtually full time from 23rd March, with the exception of Friday afternoons from 1st June, and without the use of rotas.

The work we have done to facilitate this has meant that our children could attend school as safely as possible and that they are enjoying seeing their friends and teachers again. The Government has made it clear that schools should only accept further year groups back to school, in addition to the year groups that are currently in school, if it is safe to do so. We are constantly reviewing what we have in place, and always take into consideration whether we can extend opening further and welcome back more pupils.

The factors we need to consider are:

- maintaining social distancing within the groups;
- the rooms we have available to use;
- the staffing capacity available;
- the logistics of having children on site;
- the sharing of outside spaces; and
- the organisation of lunches and pick-up/ drop-off routines.

Based on the current social distancing regulations, we will not be able to admit children from any other year groups back to school before the summer break. This ruling does include the potential move to reducing social distancing down to 1m if it goes ahead.

As previously explained, on the basis of our original risk assessment and the model we have implemented, we arranged to have a number of groups / bubbles, each with a cap based on their classroom size. We currently have 19 of these groups / bubbles in school, each based in a separate classroom.



If your child is in one of the groups identified by the Government (Reception, Y6, keyworker, vulnerable or has an EHCP), but not currently in school, we are operating a waiting list - although we presently have no further capacity.

If you wish to be placed on the waiting list, please email keyworkers@delapre.northants.sch.uk but, to **reiterate, there are presently no spaces available. We will only allocate available places until Friday 3rd July**, after that we will maintain the 'bubbles' as they are until the end of term.

I know some parents were hoping that the Government's ambition for all children to return to school for the last month of term would become a reality, and it is sad that this has caused disappointment all round. This was never likely to happen given the current restrictions on social distancing and the limiting of class sizes to a maximum of 15. **Even with the smaller numbers**, we have noticed the increase in suspected cases and have been left very concerned regarding the current Track and Trace system.

The Government's aim is still for all pupils to return to school in September. We certainly hope that this will be the case. For schools to return to normal, however, it will mean the current social distancing guidelines will have to be lifted so that 30 children can be in a classroom safely together once more. At this stage, it is impossible to tell whether this will be the case.

A number of parents have asked me what September will look like in school e.g. classes, curriculum, catch up etc... I am sure that you will understand that this is an impossible question for me to answer completely until the Government provides more clarity of any requirements within which we will have to work. However, we are looking at alternative models to ensure all children come back in some capacity e.g. Rota system / part time. As soon as this is clearer, I will provide you with details of our plans.

It is important to remember that it is not mandatory for your child to attend school at the moment and you may be happy, willing and able to keep them at home and continue to use the home learning resources available on the school website.

I would like to express my thanks to those of you that have remained at home with your child during this time and will now have to do so for the remainder of the school year. Many of you have juggled home learning with your own working schedule as well as caring for elderly family members. You may have changed childcare arrangements, working patterns, altered your shifts, taken annual leave or agreed to furlough arrangements. Your quiet resolve and cooperation with the arrangements at school have allowed us to serve the needs of the children and families that need us most. Your efforts are truly appreciated and, although nothing can replace your child attending school, you have done your utmost to minimise the impact on your child's education and well-being.

School reports

We will still be providing all children with a school report this year. You will receive these towards the end of term. Following guidance from the DfE, the section that identifies your child's attainment will be correct as of March 2020. It is not possible for us to accurately measure progress and attainment that may have occurred between then and now. More detailed information will be provided with your school report and you will also receive details of your child's teacher for the next academic year

Moving on to Next Year

Delapre Primary School will close to all pupils on Thursday 16th July 2020, and re-open to pupils on Thursday 3rd September 2020.

We are aware there is concern amongst those parents, particularly, whose children have missed out on coming into school during this very difficult time. We are planning, as a school, to use the funding we receive from the Government, designed to be used for 'catch-up', to offer a programme of intervention/extra tuition for both small groups of pupils, as well as individuals. This programme will commence in September 2020.

Normally, every year, we operate a whole school transfer day at some point in July. This is the opportunity for your child to spend time with their new class teacher prior to returning in September. We also need to consider that many children have not been given the opportunity to properly say their goodbyes to their present teacher.

Due to the situation we find ourselves in, we are planning video messages during which teachers can say goodbye to their classes and then welcome their new ones. These will be located on the school website under the 'Pupils' tab, when they are ready. You will need to look out for the 'Goodbye' and 'Welcome' videos.

When we return in September, in whatever capacity that may be, we will be expecting all children to wear their full school uniform again.

At this time of year we also wish to say our 'goodbyes' to several members of staff who will be leaving us. I am delighted to congratulate Mr Earl, Miss Norman and Miss Taylor, three of our valuable Teaching Assistants, who are leaving us in pursuit of becoming Fully Qualified Teachers. We certainly wish them all the very best and thank them for all they have done for us.

Additionally, we have two Class Teachers moving on to pastures new. Miss Griffiths and Mrs Darby will be leaving us at the end of this academic year. Miss Griffiths is looking for a new challenge and one that is considerably closer to home. We know that she will be a welcome asset at her new school, as she has been at Delapre. Mrs Darby, who has served us at Delapre Primary School for many years - not only as a Teaching Assistant, but also when she returned as Class Teacher, will be retiring from the profession. We would like to thank her for all she has given to the school and hope that she enjoys the time away from school, able to spend more time with her family.

So whilst seeing a few members of our Delapre family leave, it is also a chance to welcome in some new staff members. We are very pleased to welcome Miss Cole from September, she will be joining us as a Year 3 Teacher, and we know she will be a great addition to our staff.

Finally, I would like to personally express my sincere thanks to all of you, for your support and patience over the recent months. Those of you who I have been able to speak with face-to-face at the school gates, have been both supportive and appreciative. I have also had many wonderful e-mails and even some cards of thanks – so many that I am unable to thank you all individually. It continually reminds me, that the Delapre community is a wonderfully caring and appreciative alliance, of which we are privileged to be able to play our part.

Yours faithfully



H Portrey
Headteacher