



“Believing is Achieving”

May 12th 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Covid-19 Update- Returning to school

Since I wrote to you last week there have been 2 documents published (the latest at around 9pm last night) detailing how we are expected to reintegrate children back into school. The advice in these documents, along with the Prime Minister’s speech, is very confusing and contradictory. I will try and put as plainly as I can what I believe it says.

What we know:

- Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 are to return to their primary school on June 1st if safe to do so
- Year 10 pupils to have some face to face contact with their teachers if safe to do so
- All Primary children to be in school by July if it is safe to do so
- There is confusion about whether Nursery children should attend school
- Staff and pupils in schools will be eligible for testing if they show symptoms-*we haven’t been told how or where.*
- Children/ staff in the ‘clinically extremely vulnerable groups’ are NOT expected to attend school (notice new terminology)
- Staff and children should NOT attend school if they have symptoms or are self- isolating
- A child or staff member, who is living with somebody who is classed as clinically vulnerable, (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) is expected to attend school
- Children are to be in smaller class sizes
- If Shepwell does not have enough space for children they may be expected to attend another school ~ *We have worked out that we have enough space for 3 pupils in each classroom. We do not have space for all pupils to attend at the same time.*
- Schools can adapt the curriculum to suit the needs of their children
- Schools should support pupils attending school and home learning- *this is going to have huge implications on what we can deliver. We are currently available by email, Teams, and the end of a phone. This will change as staff cannot do two things at once.*
- Parents **WILL NOT BE FINED** if they choose to keep their child at home.
- School is expected to take the vulnerable children and children of **CRITICAL** workers (note the change from Key workers). *This means that just because you are back to work it does not mean that your child will be entitled to return to school if they are not in Year 10*
- There is new guidance about child care and child minders. They can start operating again as long as they observe the guidance set out by the Government
- Children and staff in schools are not required to wear face masks in school- *This guidance has changed twice in the last 24 hours. National guidance is that everybody in a confined space should wear a face mask. However, guidance changed in the later document says that this is not required in schools. This is your choice as a parent. However, at Shepwell I request that face masks are worn by all staff and pupils to mitigate the risk of contracting and spreading Corona virus-Covid-19*



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My honest Opinions

I think that I have the reputation of being straight talking and want to be honest with you. My staff and I are extremely worried about being able to keep your child safe in school. There is absolutely no way that I can be expected to socially distance all pupils because for some this just is not possible. We can attempt to in class, but as much as we try we are not able to guarantee this at breaks in the corridors etc.

I am concerned that the information given out to the nation is vastly different for schools. I am not a Scientist but I am worried that the easy option is to get children back into schools to boost the economy thus relaxing the requirements of social distancing, PPE etc. to suit this.

As a parent you need to think very carefully about sending your child back to school. You will have my 100% support whatever you decide and whilst in school all staff will endeavour to afford them as much protection as possible, but you should think very carefully about whether you feel it is safe to send your child back to school. We have 7 weeks left of the summer term. Whilst we all want to see normality return please put the health of your child first. **If you have any concerns do not send your child back to school.**

What next?

- **During this week you will be asked the question, “Will you be sending your child back to school during the pandemic”?**
- **I cannot guarantee that your child will have their regular teachers**
- **I cannot guarantee that your child will be in their normal classrooms**
- **Pupils will stay in one classroom for either the morning or afternoon session**
- **Pupils will be in school for either a morning or afternoon session**
- **There will be strict rules about which entrance your child uses into school. This was outlined in my last letter to you.**
- **Only in exceptional circumstances, will you be able to change your mind regarding a child coming into school. If you choose to keep your child at home that is fine. This is due to planning around staffing etc.**
- **You cannot send siblings in Key Stage 3 until we have contacted you. They will be required to stay at home.**
- **Adults will not be allowed on school site**

I am so sorry to sound so strict and these rules go totally against my philosophy of Shepwell being a warm and welcoming school.

If the information changes I will update you. It is incredibly confusing but go with your ‘gut feeling’ they are your precious children and nobody will judge you either way.

Kind regards

Stephen Pritchard-Jones

Mr S. Pritchard-Jones

Headteacher

