

Dear Parents/Carers,

Following this week's announcement from the Government that there will be no return to school for pupils in years 2, 3, 4 or 5 before the end of the summer term, I am writing to all parents as I want to keep you all as informed as possible.

This week, we opened for the designated year groups- this was down to the incredible hard work of all the staff in making sure that the reopening was as smooth as possible.

On Tuesday, the Secretary of State for Education stated the following; "While we are not able to welcome all primary children back for a full month before the summer, we continue to work with the sector on the next steps, where we would like schools that have the capacity to bring back more children—in those smaller class sizes—to do so if they are able to before the summer holiday."

Our position is the same as the vast majority of other schools in the country. Following the Department for Education (DfE) safety guidelines, we are not able to open up for other year groups as our school is already running close to capacity. The following points are the main reasons why this is the case;

- Space in school- with 'bubbles' of no more than 15 pupils, we are already utilising most available spaces in school- most of our classrooms cannot fit more than 8 or 10 children whilst maintaining 2m distance
- If additional year groups were reintroduced with the current DfE guidelines, we also could not operate within social distancing rules on the school site
- Staffing –we are having to split our available staff between bubbles and therefore, there is also no staffing capacity for additional year groups

During this period, rest assured we are working to provide the very best education that we can, be that remotely for pupils at home or for the children attending in EYFS, Year 1, Year 6 and those children who are 'vulnerable' or have parents who are 'Key Workers'.

We will continue to review and adapt our home learning provision over the final four weeks of term, to ensure we are doing everything we can to support everyone throughout this situation.

We do not know yet what the government's plans are for the summer break- although the media is talking about a 'big catch up plan'. It is important to note that schools have no further information than you have, we do not know what, if any, part we would play in this and until we hear otherwise we plan to close for the summer on Friday 10th July.

One thing which is of paramount importance to us is to ensure that when pupils *are* back in school, we will continue to focus on a careful, sympathetic and positive reintroduction. We are all very aware that child mental health is of key importance in our children's development and this will continue to be a priority.



Many are terming this as the 'new normal' but at Donisthorpe, we want the 'old normal' to be back in place as soon as we can. We will continue to follow the guidelines from the DfE and when further advice is released we will work quickly to put our plans into place.

As always, we will keep you updated as and when information becomes available to us, thank you for your continued fantastic support.

Calls home

Next week, your child's teacher will be calling home to see what, if any additional support we can offer you, if possible, they will try to talk to the children as well! They are really looking forward to speaking to you! (If your child is currently in school we will not call.)



Do not forget that this is a really challenging time for everyone. We recognise and appreciate that parents and carers are experiencing a sudden change in their lives- and are having to balance children being home full time alongside employment, potential health worries, financial concerns and care for distanced family. This will be stressful. So it is important to look after yourself and know that 'good enough' is ok- you can't pour from an empty cup. If you do need to talk to someone, you can call school or email slt@donisthorpe.leics.sch.uk, we are happy to help.

Regards,

Sylvie Newman
Executive Headteacher