

22nd May 2020

Dear Parent

We hope that this letter finds you and your family well on the eve of the May half term. On the evening of May 10th 2020, the government made an announcement detailing their aspiration for some primary aged children to return to school on June 1st alongside secondary aged students in Year 10 and Year 12 accessing some 'face-to-face' time in July. Since this announcement, there has been a great deal of information released and an enormous amount of unrealistic expectation placed on schools without any consultation. You can imagine that this has led to a very busy time and we thank you for your patience and understanding whilst governors, leaders and the wider staff at the school have required some time to manage what has been, and continues to be, a rapidly changing situation.

Following our letter to parents of 13th May 2020, we have been completing risk assessments, action plans, listening to the views of Year 10 and Year 12 parents, consulting with our health and safety adviser and responding to the daily updates from the Department for Education and CCC Covid-19 Tactical Group who have been coordinating the county response. We have also considered what being in school will look and feel like for children and staff alongside the school's capacity to provide high quality remote learning and support to our students. In addition, we have discussed a timeline which will help the wider leadership of the school carry out all necessary actions to provide staff, students and families with the security they need about our ability to safely bring children in to school in September 2020.

When will it be possible for some children to come back to school?

The governing body and wider leadership of the school met online on the evening of 21st May 2020 to consider this wealth of information and have taken the decision that The Lakes School will not be able to safely open to any students until September.

What were the key considerations which led to this decision?

You will appreciate that there were numerous factors at play which were carefully considered. Below is a short summary of the key points.

1. Risk Assessment: the school is not yet in a position to safely enable students to come in to school.
2. Timescale: the school needs time to put in place an extensive range of necessary steps affecting the building, how it is used and working practices to ensure that staff and children are kept safe so that we are as 'Covid Secure' as we possibly can be.
3. Clarity: staff, children and families will now be in a position to plan with certainty for June and July in the knowledge that the school will continue to provide support ahead of some, or all, students being able to return to school in September.
4. Equity: it is important that school staff are able to provide the same level of remote learning and pastoral support for all students and this would be compromised if staff were also expected to supervise or support some children in school.

How will the school continue to support my child during June and July?

Our key priority is to support children and families in maintaining a rhythm with remote learning until a time when we can begin welcoming children back in to school which we hope will be September. During phase 1, from 23rd March to 22nd May, we have together learned so much

about how we can use technology to teach and to learn and to communicate in new and exciting ways. On 1st June 2020, we begin phase 2 of our remote learning and pastoral support. We have established a detailed timeline of actions for each week which we look forward to sharing with you when we return after half term. In summary, we will be sharing some tips and tricks and a number of things teachers have learned to help parents and their children make the most of Microsoft Teams. We will be bringing you news of a Wellness Week, rewards and awards, Form Tutor activities including mini-tutorials and enhanced remote learning experiences such as live events and small group tutorials which will initially be targeted at Year 10 and Year 12 students in July. We look forward to providing you with more detail when we write to all parents during the week beginning 1st June.

What will September be like at The Lakes School?

Wouldn't it be wonderful if everything was back to normal? As a good school, we were all so excited to press on with the wonderful partnership that had developed between the school and families and we would like to reassure the community that we are continuing to embrace these new challenges and to use what we learn from this period as a springboard to further improve the way we provide for children and families in our community.

We do not yet know what September will bring. It is of course possible that all children in all year groups could return in September and the year will begin in a familiar manner. However, this is possibly unlikely so we are planning on the basis that we will be able to accommodate one or possibly two year groups in school on any given day due to the logistics and challenges around social distancing, hygiene, transport and many other factors in our risk assessment. We are completing a pastoral action plan in recognition of the spiritual, social and emotional needs of staff and children and we are also reviewing our behaviour, uniform and appearance expectations which may need adjusting in September to cater for the need to change and wash clothes on a daily basis etc.

It is important that parents feel secure in the work we are doing to keep your child safe and so we will be sharing our risk assessment headlines and detailed school arrangements with parents before the end of July. It is our intention to send all staff, students and parents off for the summer break with the clarity and security you all need about the arrangements for September. There is much work to do but it is important that we get it right to safeguard our community.

In closing, we would like to thank you for your continued understanding, patience and resilience. We are working hard to move things forward as briskly as we can and to keep the education, safety and well-being of our community at the heart of everything we are doing during this period of school closure. Wishing you all the very best for a peaceful and sunny half term break.

Yours sincerely



A Cunningham
Headteacher



B Smith
Chair of Governors



Excellence through a caring, learning community