21st May 2020

Dear Parents,

**Preparations for the wider reopening of school from 1st June**

As you know, the government has asked headteachers to begin to prepare to re-open schools to Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, as well as children of key workers and vulnerable children in all year groups. **However, this guidance is being reviewed on 28th May, when we are expecting updated information from the government.**

I have been working very hard with UWMAT and all the Tame Valley staff to put these plans into place. We continue to do this with the health, safety and wellbeing of all the children, staff and families wholeheartedly at the centre of all decisions and arrangements made. This will, at all times, remain our absolute priority. As I am sure you will appreciate, this takes time and plans may well change nearer the time in line with any updated government guidance.

At this current time, from our initial risk assessments, **we cannot safely cater for ALL pupils in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 along with key worker children on a full time basis from June 1st.**Therefore, assuming government guidance does not change, we will be putting in a phased return to school for these year groups over the first 2 weeks of June. This will then be reviewed and subsequent plans will then be communicated with you.

At the moment we are planning for children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to be split into 2 groups: Group A and Group B. Group A will attend school on some days and Group B will attend on others. We will ensure that all siblings are in school on the same days.

I fully understand that many of you have, quite rightly, been asking me, Miss McNicholas and class teachers questions about our plans from 1st June. I hope to now respond to as many of those as I can below:

**Will children be taught in groups of 15, as suggested by government guidelines?**

No. At Tame Valley we feel that social distancing with this many children in one room will not be possible. Therefore, children will be organised into “bubbles” of no more than 10 children. This does, however, mean that they may be taught by an adult other than their class teacher, in a room that they are not used to. We will, of course, try our best to ensure that they are in a group with as many of their friends as possible. We know who your child likes to play with and we want to make sure friends are able to spend as much time together as possible, in a safe, socially distanced way.

**How will social distancing be maintained in school?**

Although this will be very difficult, particularly for the smaller children, it will be encouraged at all times. Apart from teaching the children in small “bubbles”, we will introduce staggered drop off and pick up times for parents. We may ask some parents to use different school gates. Break times and lunchtimes will be staggered and children will have designated sections of the school playgrounds and outside areas to play in. We will be relying on parents to adhere to social distancing measures when arriving at /leaving school and in reminding children of these regularly. Of course, social distancing in school will only be possible if children are also following these rules outside of school.

**Will breakfast club be operating?**

No. In order to ensure that children are only mixing with children in their own bubble, we will not be able to offer breakfast club in the short term. We will get this back up and running as soon as possible.

**Will parents be allowed to bring children into school or visit the school site to observe social distancing measures?**

No. In order to keep the building as safe as possible, we will be asking parents to drop children off at a designated school gate and leave them with the adult they will be working with. Cones will be set up around the gates, 2 metres apart, and each parent will be asked to stand next to a different cone, with their child. Parents will not be able to come into the school building or the playground. If children are upset, they will be comforted as much as possible, with social distancing in mind. We will, of course, contact parents if any children become distressed during any part of the school day and will decide, with you, whether they should be collected.

This also means that communication with teachers / school staff will need to be carried out by phone / text / email except in emergencies.

**What if I am late arriving at school with my child?**

In order to maintain good social distancing, it will be important for children to arrive at the correct time of the day. If they are late, they will need to be brought to the pedestrian gate and a parent will need to wait there with them until they can be safely collected and brought into school.

**Can I bring siblings with me to drop my child off / collect them?**

In order to maintain adequate social distancing, it will be important for as few people as possible to be around the school gates. Wherever possible (and safe to do so), siblings should be left at home.

**What will my child need to wear or bring to school?**

Children will be encouraged to come to school in uniform, however, we feel it is more important for them to be in clean clothes every day. They will also need to be in clothes that are suitable for outside and well as indoor learning. They will be doing PE, playing outside, etc, but they will not be able to bring PE kit / footwear to change into.

Children will also not be able to bring packed lunches to school, as we need to minimise anything coming into the building from outside. Therefore, meals will be provided for all children. These will be cold packed lunches. I am working closely with the kitchen staff to ensure that these are as tasty as possible and that they contain a few yummy treats. All children will be provided this meal free of charge. Fruit will be provided as a morning snack, as usual.

We also ask that no water bottles are brought into school. We will provide children with water throughout the day in disposable cups. We also ask that reading books and bags are not brought in.

**What will my child be learning?**

Children will be accessing learning appropriate for their ability / age / year group in line with the National Curriculum, as they usually would. This will include phonics, reading, writing, maths, PE and topic.

Children not yet back in school will continue to access their learning via the school website, just as they do at the moment. They will be expected to complete this, just as they are now.

**What will it feel like in school?**

Of course your child will notice many changes in school. However, we will be doing everything we can to ensure that children feel happy and emotionally healthy in school. As a small school, we highly value our “family” feel and we hope that this will help children to settle back in quickly.

**Will PPE be used in school?**

PPE is not advised for use in school. Therefore, staff and children will not be wearing it. The only exception to this is for First Aid; if children have accidents or need intimate care (changing), or if people become ill and need looking after. There will be a First Aider on site at all times to deal with these situations as they arise. This member of staff will wear full PPE to protect themselves and the person they are looking after.

**If my child has a medical condition which makes them highly vulnerable / vulnerable should they attend school?**

In this situation, **medical advice should always be taken and followed.**

A very small number of children are in the highly vulnerable group. These children, and their siblings, should not attend.

If a child lives with someone in the highly vulnerable group, they should not attend. If they live with someone in the clinically vulnerable (but not shielding) group, they are able to attend.

**How will the school be kept clean?**

Of course there is no guarantee that anywhere can be kept completely germ free at all times. However, we are ensuring that there will be at least one cleaner on site at all times when the building is open. Cleaning will continue throughout the day, every day. There is likely to be a day every week set aside for a more thorough deep clean too.

All children and adults will be encouraged to wash their hands regularly, with soap and water, for 20 seconds. In addition to this, we have hand sanitiser positioned at various points around school. Again, regular use of this will be encouraged throughout the day.

**Do I have to send my child back to school?**

No. We do,however, need you to start thinking about whether you intend to. Once we have heard the update from the government on the 28th, we will be asking you to let us know

what your intentions are. You will need to do this via email, to your child’s class teacher. No parents will be fined if they choose not to send their children back at this point and no children will lose their place in school if they do not return straight away.

**What procedures will the school have in place should a child or adult show symptoms for Covid 19?**

The person will be placed into isolation with a First Aider, who will be using PPE. They will then be sent home as quickly as possible and recommended for testing. They will remain at home for the following 14 days or until a negative test result comes back. If the test is positive, the whole bubble will need to isolate at home for 14 days, along with their families.

**What should I do if my child or someone in my family develops symptoms before / after they have been in school?**

You should immediately inform the school that a member of your family is showing symptoms. Your whole family should be tested as soon as possible and you should all remain isolated for 14 days or until a negative test result is received.

**Has Tame Valley had any Covid-19 cases since the lockdown?**

Not as far as we know. However, if any families have had **cases that have been confirmed by a positive test result**, it would be useful to let us know.

I hope this information is useful. Please remember to email your child’s teacher **before midday on the** **29th May (and not before this date)** if your child is in one of the year groups expected back in school from 1st June. Please be aware that if you do not email, your child’s class teacher will phone you to confirm your decision. It will be from a withheld / unknown number. Please ensure you answer your phone and speak to them. It will be essential for us to know numbers of children so that we can plan effectively.

Please be aware that if you state that you do not want your child to return to school at this point, if you change your mind, you will need to let us know the week before you would like them to return.

In the meantime, continue to take care of yourselves and your families.

Yours sincerely



Miss C Nock

Headteacher