

Acorn Trust
C/O Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School
Breaston Avenue, Leigh, WN7 3DJ
Tel 01942 672614
Email admin@acorntrust.org.uk



20th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Today is thank a teacher day where nationally people are encouraged to thank teachers past and present. I feel that every day is thank a teacher day as I reflect with gratitude on the enormity of the incredible work the staff within our schools undertake, not just in these uncertain times but each and every day. I see the positive impact they have on individual children and their families. The feedback from the parent questionnaires reinforced that I am not alone in these thoughts.

The Government announced that there is a plan for schools to have a wider reopening after 1st June for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, if all 5 tests are met. We have been informed that the decision will be shared with schools no later than the 28th May. There has been a significant amount of opinion in the press regarding the decision and whether the timing was right.

Whilst guidance has been provided, schools and trusts are ultimately responsible for determining what is right for their communities in their approach to the wider reopening of schools.

I am writing to share the key drivers that are underpinning our approach across the Trust which all will adhere to in each school

1. SAFETY

The safety of children and staff will be our top priority. Full and detailed risk assessments will be conducted before any decisions to expand provision are made. They will be scrutinised by the Trust team, Local Advisory Boards and the Board of Trustees. Plans for any phased return will be extremely robust.

2. WELL-BEING

We place the well-being of children and staff central to our strategy. We recognise that we are all experiencing lockdown and the announcement to the planned wider opening of schools, in different ways and with different responses. This will be taken consideration in the way it has throughout lockdown.

Throughout this situation I have endeavoured to make decisions drawn upon keeping children and staff central, ensuring an ethical and balanced approach.

The following key principles have been agreed to be adhered to when the time is right for a wider reopening:-

- Social distancing will be a priority – no classroom will hold more children than the school deems appropriate.
- Health and safety will shape the reopening – policies and procedures for hygiene and cleaning will be well established and central to the organisation of the school day.

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- There will be a phased approach to the reopening – taking a careful, measured approach to the introduction of each new group. Not all children will be offered full time provision and unfortunately for some year groups there may not be enough capacity for them to return.

To ensure that each school is fully prepared for the wider reopening the Trust have deemed it appropriate to not expand to other year groups before Monday 8th June at the earliest.

When your child does return, it is important to stress that school will look and operate differently to how it has worked in the past. This is only a short term measure, and it is important to stress that while there will be changes, the caring ethos and nature of the school will not be lost.

Recognising the differing contexts of each school, your Headteacher will be in touch shortly to provide further details on how the phased approach will work. In concluding I want to remind you that we will continue to work in the best interests of our schools.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J A Hewitt', written in a cursive style.

Julie-Ann Hewitt

CEO