Monday 25th May 2020

Dear Parents

Re: Initial Plans for Re-Opening Arden Primary to Year 6, Year 1 and Reception children

I hope you are all well and keeping safe and following the government guidelines. I hope you all had a blessed Eid if you were celebrating it over the weekend.

As you will be aware the government’s aim was to re-open schools to specific year groups by 1st June, this was a suggested date, if safe to open. This date is now under review as you may have heard in the news.

Please let me reassure you that staff will continue to plan a range of learning activities to be completed at home for all children. These will continue to be explicitly linked to the learning that would have been taking place if the children had have been at school.

As you will appreciate, a great deal of work is being undertaken in ensuring we can reopen safely; this includes completing detailed risk assessments and planning documents/ policies, developing guidelines for staff and children and considering the layout of every classroom/ learning area to ensure we are adhering to advice from the government and Public Health.

As and when we will be able to open to pupils is still at the moment unclear. To the best of my knowledge, this decision is not being made until 28th May which is towards the end of the half-term break and will be dependent upon the Scientific advice at this point. This leaves very little time to have everything in place for 1st June and this is something that has been acknowledged by our Governors and Head teachers across the Sparkhill area and the Local Authority. As a result, it has been agreed by myself and the Full Governing Body, that it is more likely that Arden will re-open at a later date in order to ensure the school is safe and ready to open and to minimise the risk to pupils and staff.

With the year groups the government requested returning in mind, we have made calls to our Year 6, Year 1 and Reception parents and those who have expressed an interest in sending their children in will be contacted separately with more information closer to when we are able to open. We have a number of Health and Safety guidelines which we need you to discuss with your child and to follow in your own homes.

Due to staffing constraints and concerns regarding safety, we will not be able to offer a before and after school club provision (Breakfast Club and other Clubs).

Once the children are back in school, I am aiming to put children into ‘bubble’ of no more than 15 children; this is in line with our risk assessments and government guidance. I cannot guarantee that your child will be with their usual class teacher or friends; decisions about the bubble will be based on the number of children who come back to school. The starts and the ends of the school day may have to be staggered as will playtimes and lunchtimes to avoid the children in one bubble mixing with another. Each bubble will also be allocated their own outdoor space. Classrooms will be completely re-organised to enable children and staff to maintain appropriate distancing (2 Metres apart); however, I think we all acknowledge that with such young children it will be very difficult to consistently ensure they are socially distancing however hard we try. It is really important that as well as keeping the children physically safe, we ensure that they are kept mentally safe by ensuring that the learning environment remains as positive and supportive as possible.

After half-term, I will be writing to our Year 6, Year 1 and Reception parents, who have expressed an interest, to confirm our plans in more detail of how the classrooms/ areas will be organised, for the pupils.

Wishing you all a very happy and safe half-term break.

Stay Safe!

Mrs G. Shergill
Headteacher

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