



Mill Water School

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Friday 3rd July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

If you are following the news, you will be aware that the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, advised yesterday that all pupils should return to school in September. Guidance has been issued on how this should happen, but the clear message is that it is down to individual schools to make this work.

I am very happy with this announcement and hope that you are too. There will be some challenges to overcome, particularly as regards transport, but we are determined to make the full return to school work for all our pupils.

We will have time to consider the guidance in detail over the next few weeks, but the top level principles are that the following should be in place:

- a requirement that people who are ill should stay at home
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school and wherever possible minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable.

The guidance states:

Settings should ensure that they implement sensible and proportional control measures which follow the health and safety hierarchy of control to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level.

As far as social distancing in special schools is concerned, we are advised that:

Contact between individuals must be properly considered and settings must put in place measures that suit their particular circumstances. We recognise that maintaining distance or forming bubbles could be particularly difficult in special settings, particularly given the need for staff to administer care support and provide therapies to the children and young people attending. However, the average number of pupils attending a special school is much lower than the average number in a mainstream school, and this in itself, will help to limit the number of contacts for any individual.

As ever, we will do our utmost to ensure that the school environment is as safe as it can be so that you, as parents and carers, have the confidence to send your children back to us in the autumn term. If you have particular concerns regarding your child, please feel free to call me to discuss your individual circumstances.

At the same time as making preparations for the autumn, we are also getting ready to say goodbye to those pupils who will be leaving us in three short weeks. We are planning an outdoor, socially distanced, occasion to mark the event. It will be a Leavers' Assembly like no other! Those of you who are involved should already have been invited.

For those pupils who are remaining, classes for September will be shared very soon. Whilst we are trying to maintain current classes for as many as possible, there has to be some movement to accommodate our new intake. If your child is moving class, we will make sure that you can meet your new teacher via Teams or Zoom before the end of term.

Enjoy the weekend...

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized capital 'A' followed by a horizontal line.

S A Pickering