

15th May 2020

Dear parents and carers,

Since the government's announcement on Sunday that schools may be able to open during the second half of the summer term, our senior team have been working through the evolving guidance. This has raised many questions, particularly around what appears to be a change to social distancing as we have come to understand it during lockdown.

This is clearly a stressful time for school communities which is leading to an increase in anxiety. I would therefore like to reassure everyone that Arbury Primary School will only open if we can do so safely for our children, families and staff. The national press has already picked up on the concerns of parents and the teaching unions. This is a very complicated situation which may need time beyond 1st June to reach a satisfactory resolution.

We understand that circumstances for families will be different. Many of you will consider it too soon to send your children back to school and we understand fully this position. We have been reassured that non-attendance in the summer term will not result in a fine nor will it have a negative impact on the school's attendance. We also understand that many families will be needing childcare in order to return to work.

Initially, Early Years, Y1 and Y6 have been identified to be the first year groups to return. We are awaiting further guidance so that we can consider the size of groups in which children can be safely taught. Our early thoughts are that this will be around 8 children for the size of our classrooms. We cannot at this point therefore guarantee that the three year groups identified will be offered a full time placement, be taught by their class teacher or be in their classroom. To help us plan, we have emailed parents and carers in those year groups so that we can gauge their feelings about sending their children back to school under these circumstances.

Our current understanding is that the decision to move to the next phase of reopening could be made around the 28th / 29th of May which is the Thursday or Friday of the half term break. If this announcement asks schools to begin opening up, we will communicate a start date, instructions for arrival and which children are able to return once we can ensure the safety of children, families and staff.

We continue to really appreciate the efforts you are making to stay in touch with us through eSchools and support learning at home.

Yours

Ben Tull
Headteacher