

Preston Grange Primary School

Newsletter – May 25th 2020



Update: COVID19

I hope that everyone is safe and well. Following the previous newsletter on May 14th in which I outlined the significant issues and concerns that I had around an early return to school due to the risk to staff, children & families, I met with the Governing Body.

The Governors did not take the situation lightly, and spent a great deal of time considering the risks and implications of a return to school before Summer, including the additional, significant procedures and risk assessments that would need to take place before we reopened school to a larger number of children.

In addition, we considered the recent parent survey. There was an overwhelming 83% of parents from Nursery to Year 6, that said that they did not want their child returning to school before the Summer holidays.

Governors considered the following guidance from: North Tyneside Local Authority, the Department for Education, North Tyneside Health & Safety team and the teaching unions, alongside the significant concerns about health & safety and the extremely tight timescale of June 1st, in order to ensure that school is safe for everybody.

The Governing Body supported the proposal of not returning to school before Summer due to health & safety concerns, and instead, delaying a return to school until September. This will give us the time that we require in order to complete the considerable Health & Safety checks, complete the vast number of rigorous risk assessments required and allow time for shielded staff to return to work. We feel that through delaying the return to school until September, the risk level will have dropped, especially in the North East. The Governors agreed that the health & safety of our children, staff and families is paramount.

In short, school will remain open to those key workers and vulnerable children that we have always supported. We will continue to provide cover for these children and staff will continue to provide home learning for the rest of Summer term. We are here to support all of our children and families; if you have a problem or question, please do not hesitate to contact us at: office@pgps.co.uk



Under the current circumstances, home visits and visits to school for our new Nursery and Reception children will not be able to take place as normal. We have sent out our Early Years packs for parents, and will contact all of our new families and provide a further update shortly.

I have contacted the High Schools to ask for an update on transition for our Year 6 pupils. In the background, we are liaising with the high schools to hand over information such as: assessments, friendship groups and general information about the children.

Thank you to our families for completing the recent survey. Out of 183 surveys that were completed, there was an overwhelming 152 surveys which represented the number of children whose parents would not be happy for them to return to school before Summer.

We understand that not all parents are able to work from home. We also appreciate that due to child care, some families may have wished their child to return to school. However, the decision is based on a duty of care and the health & safety of our school community.

A return in September is more feasible. We believe that it reduces the risk to our children, staff and families. It allows shielded staff to return to work and time to make all of the adjustments to the school environment that is required. It is a decision that is supported by the Governing Body and the vast majority of our families.

I do feel that we will have to plan to live with COVID19 for quite some time. We all wish for nothing more than our school to return to normal or the 'new normal'. This we feel, will be safer and a more realistic timescale to do so by September.

In the meantime, thank you for your continued support and for the many positive messages I have received. Stay safe everyone.

Tracey Taylor
Headteacher

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