

All Saints CEVA Primary School & Nursery Unit

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Headteacher: Mrs Emma Johnson

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Dear Parents and carers,

I am sure you are aware that this week the Secretary of State for Education finally clarified the government's position regarding the full opening of primary schools for a month before the end of term. He has accepted that most schools (particularly primaries) do not have the capacity in terms of both physical space and teachers, to welcome back all students, but went onto say that if schools do have capacity, then government would like them to accommodate the return of more children before the end of the summer term.

In the last few months I have been asked to respond, usually at very short public notice, to circumstances I could scarcely have imagined as we entered 2020. Over the past few weeks we have been tasked with the complete redesign and reorganisation of our classrooms and other spaces to ensure that it was safe for a return to school for EYFS, Year 1 and Year 6. Following several versions of risk assessments, this has meant: emptying classrooms or furniture to enable social distancing, sectioning off playground areas, ensuring hand washing and toilet provision is in place for each group as well as acquiring sufficient PPE for staff. Revised timetables were then drawn up to allocate staff to these smaller groups alongside the opportunity to provide work for – and monitor – home learning. We were, of course, committed to doing all of this and more. I thank the governing board and you the parents for your support in working with us, throughout this time.

Today sees now a full week with all of our eligible year groups in school and following a review of practice in school we continue to feel confident with our arrangements. We have decided to open another Key Worker group to allow for the years 2, 3,4 and 5's to be taught in two bubbles where they will remain from Monday. This also allows us to be able to manage the growing numbers of children in these years' groups who have parents who are critical to the Covid19 response.

At present because of the physical size of our building and the limited outside space available to us and the structure we have planned for the groups who have returned to school along with the expanding number of children requiring our key worker provision, I have to be honest with you and say that, unfortunately we do not currently have the capacity to take any more children at this time while current social distancing restrictions apply and classes are limited to groups of a maximum of 15.

We understand that this situation is far from ideal and is frustrating for both yourselves and more importantly, your children. As staff, we feel concerned for the children who remain at home. We know the vast majority have been keeping up with their learning in their home environment, but this can never replace the experience of physically being at school. If I could bring everyone back safely, believe me I would do it.

As yourselves, I await the next announcement from the government to find out what arrangements for September will be. Thankfully, the number of new infections and deaths from Covid19 continue to fall almost daily at present, so we are hopeful that September may bring the opportunity for a normal start to the school year but we can only, like you, keep our fingers crossed at this stage.

As the situation changes so rapidly at present, such as governmental discussions around opening over the summer, I will continue to be communicate our responses to you as soon as decisions are made. Thank you for your unerring support over the past couple of months as it has made this very difficult situation much more manageable and ensured that we have all been able to stay safe and healthy.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Emma Johnson

Head Teacher