

Dean Bank Primary and Nursery School

Dean Bank, Ferryhill,
Co. Durham DL17 8PP
Telephone: 01740 651 512

E-mail: deanbank@durhamlearning.net
Website: www.deanbank.durham.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Mrs P Northcott
Chair of Governors: Mr J Davison



Believe, Achieve, Soar with Pride

Wednesday 20th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you to those parents who responded to our phone calls on Monday about whether or not you would consider sending your child to school if we were to start to the wider opening of school to children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from 1st June.

I want to outline the school's current position. We have been using government, union and Local Authority advice and guidance to start considering if and how we can make school as safe as possible for extra children and staff to begin to return after half term.

I am sure that you will agree that making a decision to reopen is not an easy one as we are in the centre of a global pandemic during which we all remain at risk. I have a duty of care to all of the staff, the children and their families at our school and am not willing to rush a decision that could compromise the health or well-being of anyone entrusted to my care.

The 2nd June is the date from when schools may be able to extend their opening arrangements. It is neither a fixed nor hard and fast date by which all school must currently open.

Currently:

- ~ We are working with rushed, patchy government advice.
- ~ We are waiting to see the scientific evidence underpinning the government's view that a return to school for more pupils and staff can be done safely.
- ~ We have not been informed that the government's own five key tests have been met to justify a change in policy at this time.
- ~ The government will not be announcing, until 28th May, its final decision on the re-opening of schools when it reviews the latest scientific advice.

For these reasons outlined above, **Dean Bank Primary School will not be opening to any extra pupils from Reception, Year 1 or Year 6 on Monday 1st June.** Staff and pupil health and welfare is the key consideration in any planning for wider opening and I need further reassurances that it is safe. Responses from parents on Monday showed that only 32% of parents in these year groups wanted to send in their pupils and 18% of these wanted to send their children back because they were



bored, not because they had weighed up the risk factors involved. This shows that confidence in our school community about a phased reopening at this time is also very low.

All teachers, including myself and governors, want to see our children back at school as soon as it is safe for them to return. I will be reviewing the situation regularly with my senior staff and the Chair of Governors. Once we have received further reassurance, we will look to start a phased re-opening of school for children.

As it stands I believe the earliest possible date for this will be Monday 8th June.

Please Note ~ we will continue to provide the provision for the identified vulnerable pupils who have always been attending school.

I will keep you updated and give you as much notice as possible when a decision to reopen to more staff and pupils has been made.

I know parents will have different views on this matter with some parents agreeing and some parents disagreeing with the decision. I would appreciate your understanding and support at this time as we try to find a safe solution to bring more staff and children back to school.

Yours faithfully

P. Northcott
Head Teacher

