



Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Earlier this week, the Secretary of State for Education clarified the position regarding the full opening of primary schools for a month before the end of term. He has confirmed that schools cannot welcome back all students before the end of the year.

Throughout this difficult time, we have been committed to doing the best for our community in the safest way possible. Next week we will welcome Reception back to school. This means we are offering a part time provision for Reception, Year 1, Year 6 and our Key Worker children. The Key Worker group is continuing to grow and we are ensuring that we have an adequate number of staff and space available for these groups. We have been pleased to see that so far, 70% of the children invited back have attended their sessions.

I understand this is an unsettling time for parents and carers. With the Government guidance continuing to change, it is difficult to predict what school will look like in September. We are currently working to ensure that support systems and procedures are in place for the autumn term. However, we will also have to wait for more information from the Department for Education before we can commit to plans. I will, however, ensure that we work with you and when the time is right, develop a plan that is right for our whole school community.

With the end of term just six weeks away, I would like nothing more than to be able to invite other year groups back in to school. As you know, at Handsworth, we are compromised in terms of space available to us. The current guidance states that 'children and staff are to only mix in a small consistent group and that small group must stay away from other people and groups.' These small groups need their own room and members of staff that are allocated to them. The arrangements we have in place at the moment meet that guidance and allows for a safe school environment.

Having said that, I believe it is very important that children are given the opportunity to come in to school, see their teacher and meet their new teacher before the end of term. Therefore, I am currently working with the Local Authority to devise a plan in which all classes will be able to come in to school and have a 'meet the teacher' session with their peers. Arrangements for this have not been confirmed yet, it is very much a work in progress, but I wanted to reassure you that I am looking to see what **can** be done rather than what **can't!**

As I have communicated before, this is a very difficult time and the uncertainty of the future leaves us feeling unsettled. It has been wonderful how the community has pulled together to work through this. Thank you for the feedback we have received; it is important we continue to work together and put our children and core values at the centre of all decisions made.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Mrs Nairne

