



Five Ways Primary School

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Dear Parents,

Over the last three months, our country has faced unprecedented times. The challenges for schools over this period could never have been predicted. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support.

Virtual 'Zoom' Meetings

You will be aware that from this week, your child's classteacher should have invited your child to join their first virtual meeting, giving them the opportunity to see and speak to their classteacher along with a small group of friends, via the Zoom app. We have received many positive comments from parents regarding the meetings that have already taken place, and I hope your child has benefited from the experience. I am sure that classteachers and pupils are looking forward to their next meeting within the forthcoming couple of weeks.

End of Year Reports

I am pleased to inform you that your child's end of year report will be emailed home to you on Tuesday 14th July, along with a letter from me explaining the slightly different format for this year's reports.

Year 6 End of Term Celebration

The Senior Leadership Team and the Year 6 team of teaching staff and support staff very much appreciate how our Year 6 pupils must be feeling as a result of lockdown, and the impact this has had upon their final year at Five Ways. Along with parents and pupils, we would wish for the normal end of year celebrations to be taking place however, even though rules and guidance are being relaxed in the community, under current Government guidance for primary schools, we are still not permitted to operate in groups of more than 15. In addition to this, bubble groups are still unable to merge to form larger groups. To have all of our 115 Year 6 cohort on the school field to take part in an end of year celebration would be viewed as a 'social gathering' therefore unable to go ahead.

However, I do understand that Year 6 pupils would like to come together in some form before the end of term, even if they are in separate bubbles of 15 on the school field, in different zones. This may be possible to accommodate if we invite 1 class at a time, possibly 2 classes at a time on the last day / half day. This is something that the Senior Leadership Team and I are currently exploring and trying to plan. Once the plan has been confirmed, I will share it with Year 6 parents next week, to give parents and pupils as much notice as possible.

In addition, we are already thinking about how we could invite all Year 6 pupils back to Five Ways for some form of reunion in the Autumn term if guidance at that time permits it. This may be in the form of a Leavers' meal and disco for all 115 children at the same time, as long as



guidance permits this type of social gathering. As soon as I have any more details about this, I will communicate this information to all Year 6 parents. I do hope that Year 6 parents can appreciate why we are taking our time to plan carefully for such events, as outlined above. I feel it would be inappropriate to rush and make mistakes that could jeopardise the health and safety of our pupils, staff and families. I look forward to writing to Year 6 parents as soon as possible regarding our plans for some form of small gathering at the end of this term, and a whole cohort gathering during the Autumn term – subject to guidance at that time.

Summer Holidays

This is advanced notice that the DfE have made it clear that schools will not remain open for vulnerable children and children of critical workers over the summer holiday. However, most importantly, they have stated that: ‘We can confirm that providers offering paid childcare will be able to operate over the summer holidays, in line with protective measures guidance. Additional funded activities may be available in local areas, such as the Holiday Activities and Food scheme.’ I am awaiting further information regarding funded holiday activities from the DfE / Local Authority and will update you as appropriate. I am also aware that JC Academy, who deliver holiday childcare on our school premises, are currently in the process of organising their summer camps. Again, as soon as I receive further information, I will update parents.

For the reasons stated above, I would like to inform you that Five Ways will be **CLOSED** to **ALL** children, including key worker children and vulnerable children, for the summer holidays from 17th July 2020 as planned.

It also means that staff will not be setting any further work for pupils after that week. Pupils need a break as much as their teachers.

Caroline Bowers Art Award

Thank you to all those families who have produced pieces of artwork in preparation for the Caroline Bowers Art Award. Please keep your artwork safe at home until further notice, and we will arrange a date for when it should be brought into school ready for judging during the Autumn term. We look forward to seeing the wonderful artwork that has been produced during lockdown, and choosing our category winners!

September 2020

You will be aware that last night, The Government set out its intent and plan for all children to return to school full time from the start of September. There has been plenty of speculation in the news about how this might be done however, as you know, schools have to be guided by the DfE and Public Health England and have to make all decisions based on advice provided.

Yesterday, The Government published its long-awaited guidance for getting all pupils back to school. Of course, The Senior Leadership Team and I will want to read through the guidance carefully and consider what this will mean in practice for Five Ways. Clearly, the guidance creates a wide range of significant logistical challenges for all schools. While we have become used to thinking about things such as staggered starts and more frequent cleaning, doing this with a full school of pupils is a very different proposition.

I would like to reassure parents that as a Senior Leadership Team and in consultation with our Governing Body, we will not hesitate in working to create the best conditions possible for us to be able to welcome pupils back in the Autumn term. All of us recognise the impact that 5 months out of school will have had on our pupils however, please be reassured that we all



want our pupils back in school and hope to see them all walking back through the school gates in September.

As soon as the Senior Leadership Team and I have studied the guidance and have planned how we are going to welcome pupils back in September, I will write to you before the end of term and share our plan with you. The plan will address important issues such as transition to new classteachers and taking part in 'Welcome' meetings, all of which are hoped to take place in the first few weeks of the Autumn term.

As you can appreciate, it seems clear that school will be very different to what we are used to for some time to come. I would like to reassure you that we will try to make it as normal and welcoming as possible at the same time as following the advice we have been given about how to keep staff and pupils safe.

We will also be monitoring closely Government guidance and plan for every eventuality. If guidance does change during the summer break, I will write to parents again updating you of any alterations to the plans put in place.

In the meantime, I would like to thank you in advance for your patience whilst we finalise our plans for September, and thank you for the continued support that you have shown to Five Ways during these unprecedented times.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Rachel Mander
Headteacher

