

## 22.05.20 – Governing Board message re re-opening

Dear Parents and Carers

We hope this letter finds you and your families safe and well during these times. As you probably know, the Government has asked schools to begin reopening from 1<sup>st</sup> June. We wanted to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and patience until now. This has been invaluable for the Headteacher, Jane Hughes, and has encouraged all the staff.

In the media, there has been a lot of critical comment about schools and teachers and their lack of support to pupils whilst at home. We believe much of this to be unjustified and can assure you that, throughout this pandemic, our Dorin Park staff have been actively keeping in touch with one another, families and children. Staff have willingly taken on a huge increase in workload; some worked without extra payment throughout Easter Holidays (to support keyworker children). Many have suffered illness themselves as well as caring for their own loved ones and children.

With regard to the school's reopening, our prime concern is always the safety of our children and staff. Parents, including myself, would rightly expect that they could send their child to school knowing that they would be safe. In addition, staff and trade unions rightly expect that we adhere to our duty of care to ensure the staff are safe as far as we are able.

It is with this in mind that Jane Hughes wrote to you asking you whether you wanted your children to return. Just under half said that they wanted their children to return. The remainder felt it would be unsafe, were shielding or needed further scientific evidence from the government before deciding.

Since the announcement, the school has been working hard to put these measures in place. Jane Hughes will update you in due course about what the plans are. Whilst the school and the staff are ready for your children to return, with the best will in the world, schools will not be 100% safe against virus transmission. Government guidance has taken days or weeks to be released and assimilated, especially for Special Schools.

All the proposals have been risk assessed and the Local Authority have issued their own risk assessment framework, which is now being completed for submission. The Local Authority has said that each school should decide whether it is safe for them to open. This decision is also dependent upon other key factors such as school transport and unions.



INVESTORS IN PUPILS

Head Teacher - Jane Hughes

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The school will re-open at some point, although we don't know exactly when. We wish to reassure you that we will support the school in only reopening when it is considered safe to do so for all concerned. We regret that this may necessitate decisions being taken at short notice.

Finally, as a parent of a child within the school I have full empathy for how hard life is at home and have full admiration for you all. If anyone is struggling then please contact the school directly, or, should you wish to contact me, you can do so by email on: [amanda.hartley@dorinpark.co.uk](mailto:amanda.hartley@dorinpark.co.uk)

Yours faithfully

*Amanda Hartley*

Chair of Governors