



Lydgate Junior School

Headteacher: Mr S Jones
Deputy Head: Mrs J Farrell
Address: Manchester Road, Crosspool, Sheffield, S10 5DP
Telephone: 0114 2669500; Fax: 0114 2638210
Website: www.lydgatejunior.co.uk
Email: enquiries@lydgate-jun.sheffield.sch.uk



To parents of all pupils in Year 6.

Dear Parent/Carers,

May I first apologise for the time it has taken to write to you since the Government's announcement about opening up schools to more pupils. I am expecting our school's Governing Board to 'sign-off' on plans and risk assessments regarding implementing the process at Lydgate Junior School on Thursday evening, 21st May. We are still receiving information and guidance from many sources that is informing these plans, and the final decisions, and there is still a final announcement to be made, again by central Government, on 28th May.

Each school is different in context, scale, shape and make-up. The statement that schools would open up in the way expressed by central Government was an over-simplification that I suspect has led to misplaced expectations and will unfortunately lead to disappointment.

We are being asked to provide spaces for:

- Children of all critical workers and children deemed to be 'vulnerable' first from across school, and then if space and staffing permits,
- Children in Year 6.

In order to secure proper health and safety conditions schools have been given guidance to follow that limits group sizes to a maximum of 15; basically half a class. As no school could quickly, easily or affordably increase its physical capacity we are also limited by the number of suitable spaces we can use. We are also limited by staff availability – we have only so many teachers and teaching assistants. We will be able to hold a maximum of 16 groups, just as we have 16 classes normally.

However, a thorough Risk Assessment and consultation has reduced the safe capacity, where we can maintain sensible 'social distancing' principles of those teaching spaces and elsewhere, to a maximum of 11 children, plus one or two adults in each space. We therefore have a maximum capacity at this time, and with these controls in place, of 176 children.

Our best information shows that we have in excess of 220 children on roll who are the children of critical workers. We have also identified an additional 25 children who meet our criteria as 'vulnerable'. Year 6 has 121 pupils, around 60 of them being children of critical workers.

Quite clearly from these simple figures, we will not be able at this time to have any additional Year 6 pupils back in school, and we will not actually be able to offer places for all the children of critical workers. There will be some children who are both in Year 6 and the children of critical workers who will not be able to return at this point.

Governors will be agreeing criteria for allocating places in the provision we can make at this time, and I am sure that they will not find this position at all comfortable – I know I don't.



We are a Rights Respecting School that delivers an engaging and exciting education for all.

Lydgate Junior School

We hope that we will be able to continue to provide good quality resources and ideas to support learning at home for those children we cannot accommodate at school. However, it is very likely that our home learning provision will change from what we offer now. All our school staff will be needed to provide teaching for the 16 groups we hope to have in school, and so we will have far less capacity to source and supply these resources. We will do our very best to help you and your children, of course.

We all hope that the worst of the crisis has passed and that things will continue to improve. The situation will be kept under constant review at all levels, and as soon as we can progress to another phase of wider opening we will do so – we want our school back and we want our pupils back as soon as possible. We want our Year 6 pupils to enjoy a proper, fitting end to their Primary School years and a helpful set of transition activities; we will be working with Key Stage 3 colleagues to try to make this happen.

I appreciate that this is not the news many of you, or your children, will have wanted or have been expecting. I wish we had the ability to do something bigger than this but that is simply not possible at this time.

We will keep in touch with all the children of our school through the many routes we are using – our blogs, emailed resources, our Facebook page, the school website and so on. I really hope we will see you all again soon.

Yours sincerely,



SR Jones
Headteacher