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Dear parents,

I hope you are all safe and well and staying sane in what feels an increasingly mad world.

As you will know, Prime Minister Johnson made an announcement on Sunday night which caught many sections of the country by surprise, not least parents and teachers.

Following this announcement there was a further statement in Parliament and a series of directives giving more detail to the initial announcement.

While at the moment there are still many more questions than answers, I have tried to communicate with you as openly as honestly as possible through this whole crisis, so I think it is important that I share with you what I know at the moment – as much of what we read in the papers or watch on TV is just speculation and can be very misleading.

The government has said that their intention is for children in Year 6 to return to school on the 1st of June. They have explained that there are certain 'tests' that have to have been met in order for this to happen, and that these tests have not yet been met. The first thing to bear in mind is that it is unlikely that we will know for sure whether schools will open on the 1st of June until a few days before, probably towards the end of Half Term as the Thursday of Half Term is the date for the official lockdown review. This will be too late for schools to be able to risk-assess and organise the re-opening of school just a couple of days later, so we have to consider plans now. As I am sure you can appreciate, given the announcement on Sunday and the slow release of guidance since that time, these plans are in no way fully formed. However, there are a few things that I think are worth sharing with you at this stage.

So the indication is that from the 1<sup>st</sup> of June, the Monday after Half Term, our Year 6 children may be able to return to school. On the face of it this sounds exciting and hopeful as of course we dearly would like to see our Year 6 back at St Peter's. But I need to make it clear that this would not be like any Term 6 that we would like our Yr6's to have. There is very clear guidance on what we would have to put into place for those children who return. Children have to be kept in groups no bigger than 15 children. They must socially distance. They have to be kept with the same adult. They cannot mix with other adults or other children. They cannot have playtimes or lunchtimes together. There will need to be staggered start and end times to the school day. We will need to have a 'one way' system for walking round the school.

These isolating measures for keeping the groups completely separate need to be in place in case there is a case of Coronavirus within school. The advice is that staff and children will not be provided with PPE or face masks, but we have been told that if a member of staff or a child has the symptoms of Covid19 they will be sent home and they will be tested. If they test positive, **everyone** in their group will have to be sent home and everyone in that group has to self-isolate for 14 days. If the child at home then shows symptoms at home, then everyone in the household must self-isolate for the next 14 days.

As I say, it would not be the Term 6 we would want for our Year 6 – school will not feel the same at all. They may well not be with their teacher, or with all their friends, there will be no end of year performance with Mrs



We're working  
towards Artsmark  
Awarded by Arts  
Council England



Websper, no Leavers' Service in Church, no signing of shirts or Celebration Assembly.

We will of course endeavour to keep the school as clean as possible, to reinforce good hygiene and handwashing and try to ensure social distancing. But I want to be honest and realistic with you. Children are not good at social distancing. It will not be possible to wipe down or sterilise every pen or pencil or surface that children touch before another child touches it. I can't tell you hand on heart that it will be safe.

And the government recognises this. They have made it very clear that there is no pressure for parents to send their children into school. There are no consequences for keeping your children at home – no stern letters, no fines for non-attendance. And St Peter's will continue to prepare home learning for our children every week as we do now.

The government has also indicated that they have the 'ambition' that every year group will be invited back to school before the summer. This would be in the same manner as I have outlined for Yr6 – groups of up to 15, one adult, no mixing, staggered start and end times, testing and self-isolation for the whole group, no drama with Mrs Websper or sport with Mr Allen, no Breakfast Club or Extended Day . And of course you will have all noticed more quickly than the government that schools just don't have twice the number of classrooms or twice the number of teachers to make this possible!

But that is a puzzle for the future.

For now at school we are working out our plans for if Year 6 are told they can come back to school. Next week, when possibly we will know a little more, I will contact our Yr 6 parents to ask if you think it is safe to send your children back to school to get an indication of likely numbers. We know every family is in a different situation – some may have close contact with grandparents or have a vulnerable or shielded member of the household and will know they will keep their children at home, while others may well feel that they have had the virus already and are safe to come back. I want you all to know that we fully support the government's view that it is your decision whether or not you want your child to return to school.

I hope this makes things just a little clearer! It is such a difficult time and we are all trying to work out what to do for the best.

Stay safe,

Tim Hunter-Whitehouse