



Reaching for the Stars !

4th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers ,

After much soul searching the governors and staff have decided to open our school as normal on Tuesday 5th January but with the following reservations and requests :

- **FACE** - All adults entering the school premises/grounds must wear a face mask , unless excused for medical reasons .
- **SPACE** - Everyone must maintain two metres Social Distancing when in and around school grounds particularly when dropping off or picking up children - please stand to one side at gates and please do not ' clog up ' the pavements outside of school.
- **HANDS** - Encourage your children to wash their hands properly and thoroughly on a regular basis - we will reinforce this message in school.
- **VENTILATION** - **Please ensure that your children are wearing layers (of clothing) when they attend school as school will be opening doors and windows on a regular basis to ensure frequent ventilation.**

You may not realise this, but we came very, very close to deciding to close the school over the weekend ! The Chair of Governors , Mike Cornes , myself and senior leaders have agonised over the pros and cons involved with making such a decision. The closure would have started on Tuesday 5th January until 18th January 2021 initially. Below are some of the factors we took into consideration:

- Schools have been put in an intolerable position which has led to much soul searching as to the right decision to make for our context in Davyhulme Primary School. Ultimately it has come down to the health and safety of our children , staff and families as they face the new variant of Covid19 which spreads faster in transmission from person to person therefore it would seem to make sense that if you reduce the numbers in school you reduce the risk of transmission.
- The senior leadership team are concerned that numbers are rising in Trafford and Greater Manchester , we are in Tier4 , there is a new variant of Covid19 spreading rapidly particularly where there are large groups of people in close proximity (we cannot always guarantee Social Distancing in our setting) and the primary schools in London are closed for two weeks why are we different ?
- We are aware that the data would indicate that children are at low risk from being seriously ill from Covid19 but they can still carry the virus and as one commentator stated today - "children and the virus are like children and glitter - they get it everywhere " .
- Staff unions , NAHT are taking legal action against the government while Unison and the NEU have advised their staff not to work in schools under the present circumstances as the risks are too high. Again the implication is that if numbers are reduced then the risks are reduced to staff , pupils and families. While children may not be affected or recover quickly by Covid19 , the same cannot be said for staff and older family members.

We are at a critical stage now (again) and if the preventative steps above are not followed then we cannot guarantee that the school will remain open to every child. The situation could change at any moment and at very

short notice so parents , carers and families should have a **PLAN B** (who will provide childcare if not the school ?) ready in the event of a partial opening of the school.

The majority of our staff are very anxious about returning to work under the present situation , unions have advised them not to come in , one union is taking legal action against the government so the possibility of a school closure / partial opening is very real and we need to do everything we can to support the staff by adopting the preventative measures above.

OUR PLAN B - At DPS - In the event of School Closure and Partial Opening.

School will be open to those children :

- **Who have a social worker or are known to social services and receiving support.**
- **Who have an EHC plan - medical or educational support plans with 1-1 support.**
- **Who the School identify as needing daily consistent support.**
- **Whose parents (both or single parent without support) are Key Workers.**

Our main aim is to fight the new variant of Covid19 by reducing numbers of people (pupils and staff) in school so we may not be able to accommodate every parent claiming Key Worker status as we will have a limit (ceiling) on numbers.

We are currently reviewing our Key Worker lists so if your status has changed you need to update us by sending the relevant documentation to keyworker@davyhulmeprimary.com

All other children not offered a place will be supported using our online platform ' Seesaw ' and other electronic/digital facilities such as Zoom.

All parents should ensure that their contact details are up to date and they should also visit our website to get the latest information .

Thank you for your continued understanding and support in these difficult times.

Yours sincerely ,

Mr P McDowell
Head Teacher

Mike Cornes
Chair of Governors