



# *Dolton Church of England Primary School*

*Dolton, Winkleigh, Devon, EX19 8QF*

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***Headteacher:*** Mrs. Rachael Sharpe

***'Together we nurture, love and learn whilst aspiring for excellence.'***

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Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear parent/ carers,

Thank you for your patience and understanding whilst we have continued to respond to the announcement made by the Government on May 11<sup>th</sup> regarding a staged return to school.

Yesterday, the Government announced that all five 'tests' have been met and schools can start to reopen to more children from June 1st. As a Trust of schools we are committed to supporting the government's overall aim of helping families return to work, but in as safe manner as possible. The reopening of schools will not look the same across the country or indeed our county, as each school have individual circumstances that must be taken into consideration before reopening takes place.

After extensive meetings, completion of necessary Risk Assessments and consideration of both the Government guidance and our capacity as a school to safely deliver a phased return it was announced last week that **none of the schools in our Trust has the capacity to open for Year 6 children** within the government social distancing guidelines. I know this is deeply upsetting for parents and pupils and please know that at Clinton and Dolton we are just as saddened but we cannot safely accommodate all groups in school at present.

We have followed the recommended prioritisation order below at our setting, and will only re-open for each year group if we have the staffing and space capacity to safely provide the necessary protective measures.

1. Vulnerable children;
2. Critical Worker children;
3. Nursery children; (3 and 4 year olds and then 2+ year olds)
4. Reception children;
5. Year 1 children;
6. Year 6 children.

We are adhering to the Government social distancing guidance which states that people must be at a distance of 2m from each other to reduce the risk of infection. We have measured rooms and set out desks at these distances to check how many children we can safely accommodate within classrooms – this is a very

small number of only 8 in some cases. Some spaces in school have been considered unsuitable for children to be in at this time due to poor space, lack of ventilation, narrow entrances and exits and no outside doors. We are also working with a reduced number of staff whilst trying to ensure measures such as two adults to a bubble are met and children do not mix with other bubbles at break time or lunchtime.

In addition to this, we are ensuring that the hierarchy of measures set out in the protective measures guidance can be met within school:

- ensure parents are advised to keep children with any symptoms at home
- ensure staff who are symptomatic do not attend work
- frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices
- regular cleaning of settings
- minimising contact and mixing

In line with the Governments priority list we will be open for an increased number of pupils from Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June. **A further letter will be sent later today to vulnerable, critical workers, preschool, reception and year 1 pupils who have said they require the provision or would like their child to attend. This letter will explain key procedures for returning to school.**

It is important to note that any changes in Government guidelines to the wider reopening of schools over the next few weeks will be immediately reflected in what we are able to offer safely at The Clinton and Dolton C of E Schools. If measures are significantly relaxed in the coming weeks, we will work on opening for a wider number of children but at this time we can only work within the parameters we have been given.

As parents, the safety of your child at this uncertain time is the most important thing to you and we would like to assure you that the health, well-being and safety of our children, staff and community are at the heart of the decisions we have made. Each week we will continue to send learning to those children still at home however this will look slightly different to what you have received over the past 7 weeks. The learning will be emailed to you each Monday ready for the following week. Welfare calls will be made by myself or Mrs Turner each week as the teachers will now be in class full time. You can still contact the class teacher through the class emails however they will only be accessing this on a Wednesday when they are working from home in order to give each school a deep clean.

If you have any concerns or queries, please contact the school offices on the usual number or email the admin address above and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Warmest regards,



Mrs. Rachael Sharpe