

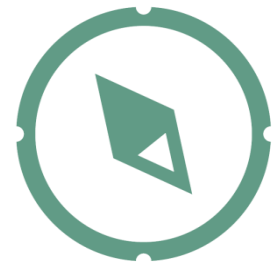
The Compass Partnership of Schools

c/o Willow Dene School, Swingate Lane, Plumstead, London, SE18 2JD

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Trust Leader of The Compass Partnership:

John Camp

Thursday 14th May 2020

Dear parents and carers,

I hope this letter finds you well.

The Government announced plans this week for primary schools to begin a phased return for children in nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, from June 1st 2020, at the earliest. The Government explained that this was based on the following scientific evidence:

- There is moderately high scientific confidence in evidence suggesting younger children are less likely to become unwell if infected with coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Because evidence shows the particularly detrimental impact which time spent out of education can have upon them. In addition, older children are more likely to have higher numbers of contacts outside of school so pose a greater transmission risk, and they are typically better able to learn at home.

Alongside the decision to begin to open schools to more children, the Government published detailed guidance to schools to support us in maintaining a safe environment for children and staff to learn in. This guidance is also based on the Government's scientific advice.

The Government acknowledges in the guidance that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. Schools are therefore working through the hierarchy of measures set out below:

- avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices
- regular cleaning of settings
- minimising contact and mixing

In addition to the measures detailed above, the Government explained that it is still important to reduce contact between people as much as possible. The Government states that schools can achieve this and reduce transmission risk by ensuring, where possible, that children, young people and staff, only mix in a small, consistent group, and that that small group stays away from other people and groups. Public Health England (PHE) is also clear that if early years settings, schools and colleges do this, the risk of transmission will be lowered.

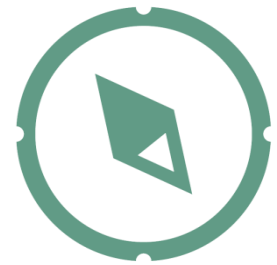
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It is important to emphasise to you all that at this point we have not taken any decision to open to more children than we currently provide for. We are currently looking at what a range of possibilities would look like and what we believe our schools could safely manage based on thorough COVID 19 risk assessments. As part of this process schools are beginning to seek views from parents in nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 classes as to whether they would consider sending their children back to school. Some of our schools may already have done this and some will be doing it over the next few days. We do understand that parents will want more detailed information about the measures schools will be putting in place before they make a fully informed decision, but we are asking for an indication at this stage to aid our planning.

It is also important to emphasise that these are plans made at this moment in time, based on the scientific and government guidance that is currently available. The Government has made it clear that June 1st is the earliest possible date and that decisions will be reviewed based on emerging evidence or changing virus data. We will open our schools to more children if we can do so safely and within the parameters set by government guidance. The three principles upon which we are making all decisions are as follows:

- Safety first
- Fairness and equity
- Quality learning for all children

Once we have completed the planning process we will communicate our decision to you all and the plans that sit behind this.

Please do not hesitate to contact your school or me via the email address at the top of this letter, should you have any questions.

Very best wishes to you all.

John Camp

Trust Leader