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Dear Parents and Carers,

### Returning to school

On Sunday evening when our Prime Minister outlined his "easing of lockdown measures" he talked of his hope for the children in YR, Y1 and Y6 returning to school as from the 1<sup>st</sup> June. We received on Monday evening the guidance provided for schools on how to prepare for this but, I am afraid, there are still many unanswered questions. Please be assured that I, the Governors, the Leadership team and all staff at Compton and Up Marden CE School are working tirelessly to make our way through this and to ensure that we continue to keep all staff and children safe, as far as it is within our power to do so.

There is a huge amount to navigate before 1st June and, whilst I appreciate you are keen to know exactly what is happening, I am afraid there will be no concrete plans from us until next week at the very earliest (partly because we are all awaiting Paul Wagstaff WSCC Director of Education and Skills, response to the DfE document and the WSCC advice which he hopes will be with all schools by Monday.) and, whilst I hope to be able to give you more clarity next week, this does of course depend heavily on how things progress nationally over the coming days. That said, there are a few things I can share with you now.

Firstly, please find here the guidance released by the Government. This is well worth reading as a parent/carer, but please be mindful that all schools will have to approach things differently depending on their context.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>



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There have already been a few, understandable questions, that I can answer for you now:

**Will Years R, 1 and 6 definitely be in school as from 1st June?**

No. Firstly, as the Government guidance outlines, this will only be permitted nationally if certain measures are met in regard to the progression of the virus. However, it is also important to say now that, even if a date is confirmed by the Government, it will still depend on each individual school's ability to implement the guidance, staff the school, and ensure that everyone is safe. Until we are confident that we can do this through our comprehensive planning and risk assessment, we are unable to say if we will definitely open this term to any pupils. We are working hard, I hasten to add, to put all the measures in place but some aspects, such as staffing (we may have staff who will still need to be in self isolation after 1<sup>st</sup> June), are simply beyond our control.

**If schools do reopen for these year groups, do I have to send my child in?**

No. The Government guidance clearly states that you are 'strongly encouraged' to send your children in, but also outlines that if your child is shielding or living with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, they should not attend. I also understand that for many of you this will simply feel too early. No fines will be issued for non attendance before the summer holidays.

**Will it be 'normal' school for these year groups if they are allowed back?**

No. I am afraid not. Class sizes will be reduced and children will not be able to mix with children in other classes – creating separate groups within the school. The guidance stipulates clearly that the adult assigned to a class group cannot swap. This clearly demonstrates that your child is not likely to be with their normal teacher/TA, and not all their peers and friends. Break times will be staggered, lunch times will be carefully organised and starts and ends of day (timings) altered and staggered between year groups. Whatever we put in place may need to be altered if we then open up to all primary year groups.

**Will the childcare provision continue for children of key workers in other year groups?**

Yes. Although, as always, all provision is reliant on staffing. When we are open to other year groups, however, we will need to alter the provision i.e. it maybe will be based in a different part of the school than now and will be with different members of staff. We would still only be able to support children of key workers and vulnerable children. I appreciate how difficult this is – the Government have told you to go back to work if possible, with very little notice and with very little increase of childcare provision. But, in order to be able to maintain the provision for key workers we need to be very strict on this – the room that will be used can only hold 15 children in keeping with the guidelines.



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**If the School partially reopens, will remote learning be continuing for all the other year groups? And what about the children in Years R, 1, 6 that I have decided to keep at home?**

For all other year groups yes. Maintaining our remote school provision throughout the rest of this term is vital and something that we are considering alongside all of our other plans. This is an aspect that needs more discussion in school though. It might mean that those in Y2-Y5 year groups may have learning set by someone else remotely as most teachers will be in school teaching. For those in Years R, 1 and 6 we hope to be able to set some remote learning who are remaining at home, but I hope you understand that this might not be able to be at the same level as before due to staff providing provision in school as well.

**Will my child be safe returning to school this term?**

This is of course the most important question and one I currently simply cannot answer. Obviously it is our absolute wish to be able to answer this positively, and we will only open the school to any year group once we are able to do so. I am an educationalist, not a health expert, and that is me being completely honest with you. But we are working closely with advisors, other schools, health professionals and will work closely with you as parents/carers as we move forward. One thing I can say is that, whatever we put in place, it will not be possible to properly social distance children whilst in school especially the younger the children, but we will work hard to do what we can in this area.

An email will be sent today to Parents of Year R, 1 and 2 children asking you to indicate if you will be sending your child back to us if we open from the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.

All headteachers, teachers and school staff always have the best interests of your children at heart. If any school says that something is not possible, even if it appears possible for the school down the road, then please trust that it is not possible. We will all be thinking through all the options and there will be genuine reasons why we are or are not able to do things, and sometimes we may not be able to share those specific reasons with you. Please continue to support us as we navigate this next chapter.

Yours sincerely.

Mrs Claire Inskip  
Headteacher



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