



Jennett's Park CE Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your views on returning to school. Over 165 families responded within 2 hours. Thank you. Do fill it in if you've not had a chance.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=TMDWt0iPMk66KDUenvxjRjtfBVdljb1EuPjZxiVxeFdUMk9LVVpFMzhHWkhTV0tIWII4UENVWFk5MC4u> I wanted to ask you your opinion before I expressed my own personal one publicly. One of our values is honesty. I always try communicate to you honestly as this is part of the Rainbow promise we make for a strong community. Children's well-being both physical and mental is my staff's primary goal. Nothing is more important.

I have and always will do pride myself of being an educator. Schools are ill equipped for facing the current pandemic crisis but there are a range of common sense sensible things we can do and always have done. I will explain some in a future document but a scarce few have been outlined in the government's strategy released last night- smaller classes of no more than 15, not being in contact with others throughout the day, increased handwashing and cleaning. I, my team (both within school and within the Bonitas Trust) and the local community of Headteachers with which I work, need time to digest the guidance given. This is the parents version <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers> I urge you to read it.

The government has also issued guidance to schools which we will use in Jennett's Park to plan for reopening if it is safe. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>

The Government documents answer some thoughts on the reasons why younger children were prioritised. That was a running theme in your questions. Why the 3-6 year olds? I was as surprised as many when Nursery was then added into the calculation.

The other theme 'was can you maintain social distancing?' I can be truthful here in saying that whilst we will continue to implement whatever the government suggests and more, but true social distancing in schools has never and is unlikely to ever exist completely. We are all in contact with each other and if one child is ill then most likely more will get it. We have very good hygiene routines and many things we did before closure will be reintroduced and heightened -clearly we are aiming to slow the spread between



children and adults and children to children. We will have procedures to sensitively look after a child who is sick and to let you those children or members in their family get sick.

The spread as we know is most virulent in adults. My staff have been working three teams whilst we have been open and focussing in helping the key worker and vulnerable children. We have been training ourselves for the problems faced on return, planning and answering the many emails and phone calls that come in. We have stayed relatively healthy which is more than other schools nationally. I can say that if you sent your child back they may not get their teacher all week. I won't expose my staff in the identified year groups to be working with each other for long periods of time in the week. Those children whose families do choose for them to come in will have trained staff and familiar friendly faces but equally I will not risk my staff or their families by being in longer than necessary.

Quite clearly, we need as a school to reflect on the questions and comments you have raised. Some have been answered in the government guidance- for example *no one will be forced to send children into school, nor will they be penalised if they choose to do so*. Others need unpicking.

It is odd to say I am reassured to say that I, like you, are worried for many different reasons. You are not a community to panic and that is why I love the school so much. Raising questions is not an issue- we know full well we won't please everyone with our answers but we promise you that you can ask. We may not always agree but the trust you give us is choosing our school is important. Again thank you for some of the logistical suggestions, some we have already thought of, some are national issues and some will be entirely down to us as a school. I cannot tell you about September or classes or future plans yet, but we will as I promised last year tell you in good time if there are changes. Moving children up with their teachers in entirety is not an easy solution nor is repeating a year.

Some parents asked about how exactly we will close the gaps in the learning created. That is a many layered question, but fundamentally that is also what we are trained for as educators. It will be a central goal for everyone at Jennett's Park over the coming year. We want every child in our school to flourish and achieve under God's love. That is academically, emotionally and spiritually. We will want to know how your child has been getting on at home before they return and will send out a response form for anyone coming back. Thank you to the many people who have already volunteered to be catch up readers or to work in small groups. We will need you, but not just yet.

Academic success has been hindered by not being in but I don't believe it's irrevocable. Academia can't come first though when we eventually all return- please listen my reasoning on this. Stress makes you forget things. Adrenaline is great for fight and flight but acquiring learning over time needs lower levels of anxiety. If you are in panic mode you do not learn as fast as if you were not.

Children and adults will need to prioritise their emotions about returning to school settings. A lot of you said that they are missing their friends, the school, the routine and us. Learning how to socialise is our first aim. Routines, moving around school, how to interact in small groups again are huge obstacles to overcome for everyone. We know you will be worried about what to say, what to do, where to be. As before we will send you as much as possible to help you make decisions.



Although we will continue to send out the work packs and continue a theme in learning we know it is not equal to having your teacher next to you. It was our aim to get you something along with the online and excellent resources from Bitesize, Oak National Academy, White Rose Maths and Read, Write Inc. Phonics. We did not want children stuck to iPads/ devices all day as we know that was not healthy.

We know there are online devices such as Zoom, 365 Teams and WebEx. We have looked into how these are being used and know that in the main the offer we have given you (including communication from Marvellous Me and Tapestry) has allowed you to design your learning to suit your family's needs. Anyone who phones or emails is given time including from our Educational Psychologist and Family Support Worker.

We know the element that is missing is the social side for those who need it. We will discuss this as a school level. In the meantime join up in small groups on Zoom/Teams yourself and join to the Facebook pages for the different year groups. They are not run by the school but are for the school. They have already triggered many lovely examples of community projects. Thank you to those who regularly post and keep people up to date on them. Please remember though that if you post on there it is not the same as telling us as a school. We do not monitor the Facebook traffic. Do come to the choir on Tuesday evenings if you want to see a face or two- it was amusing last week. Email school@ for the joining details.

As always keep emailing to school with questions regarding home learning techniques. Especially if you plan to continue to home school as is your right, please do get in contact and we'll help you as much as possible. If you've not seen the advice for adults page from Alison Greenwood and Craig Tribe I suggest you do so <https://www.jennettpark.bracknell-forest.sch.uk/advice-for-adults/>

Finally to end a personal reflection; I myself was ill as a teenager for many years and missed over 3 years of formal education in a school. I maintained some contact with the school and friends but the priority for me at that time was reading, therapy through arts and being with family. I am an adult who has friends, education and a job I love. My life would be different if not for the virus I caught at that time.

What can you do next? Well, all we can do is pass on the information when we get it for you to make a decision. The changes we face will inevitably create stress. We'll try to explain them to you and your children so you are aware why we do things. Work with us on that please. If you have a concern about a change, do voice it to us through the proper channels as you know we will listen. We love you our community and you the families we are honoured to serve.

Kind regards and stay safe.



Liz Savage

Headteacher

