



## Preshute Church of England Primary School

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Head teacher: Mrs C Hann-Perkins

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

We hope that you have all enjoyed some kind of Half Term break, even if it probably looked very different to the one you were expecting, as that was certainly true for us.

Times continue to be uncertain and, with the continuous changes in Government guidance, plotting the way forward remains a challenge.

We are incredibly lucky to have such strong engagement from parents and carers and we have greatly appreciated your feedback and questions; we will continue to provide answers and explanations, wherever possible. By mid-June, a member of school staff will have contacted you to find out how you all are, so please feedback honestly - we are here to listen. More than ever, it is important that we continue to work together.

In the meantime, here is some information to help you understand the rationale behind our recent decisions.

### Wider opening of the school

As you are aware, the Government has an ambition for Reception class, Year 1 and Year 6 to return to school from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June. Since the Government's announcement, staff and governors have been working together to understand the implications of how the various guidelines (Government, Local Authority and those made by teaching unions) could be safely and appropriately applied for Preshute. Each school has a unique context, circumstance and cohort of pupils, so the decisions made at Preshute may rightly vary from those made by other schools.

Having carefully considered the guidance and taking into account the many important aspects of providing a school setting for your children (including our physical space and staffing), we have planned a phased return to school initially for **Year 6 only** to return at the start of June.



We share the disappointment this decision may bring, but our overriding concern (and legal responsibility) is the Health and Safety of all those on site.

We have then created various scenarios, whilst adhering to ensure the 2m social distancing, to allow more children to attend, even if just one or two days a week. The layout of the school restricts the numbers that can be allowed in a classroom simultaneously - there are very strict guidelines which determine staff to child ratio. The return of a class of 30, maintaining 2m spacing, will take 4 classrooms and hence 4 teachers - one teacher per group is required (plus other staff to provide additional support). We only have 7 classrooms plus the Hall and we also need to ensure sufficient space for the further return of children of key workers and vulnerable groups, as directed by the government.

Considering the effect these measures will have on the children, particularly of working within a small 'bubble' group with 'a teacher' (possibly not their class teacher), it is very clear that the younger year groups would find the new routines very disconcerting. This was echoed by the response to a request for parental thought: we had around 75% of Y6 considering return and less than 25% of Class 1 and Reception. Therefore, we felt that the children in Class 6 would be more able to adjust to this initially.

It is the case that until the guidelines are changed, we have discussed that our next step in the current school year - **if permitted** - would be a partial return of Y1, this may be using separate days for smaller groups to reduce interaction between "bubbles". We cannot offer a specific date for this as of yet.

### Home Learning Provision

We are also now very mindful that this may mean that Years 2-5 and Reception may not physically return for some weeks yet, therefore our other priority is to continue to develop our Home Learning provision for ALL classes.

We are currently trialling some potential other uses of technology that may assist with learning and greater develop interaction between the teacher and the children. We know that you are very aware of the challenges we have been facing regarding technology, so we are very pleased to announce that we have secured a new IT provider to help us move forward. With their support, we have now started trialling how we could use Google classrooms to enhance learning opportunities. Class Dojo are also developing their site by unlocking additional features, such as the children being able to reply to teacher comments. Teachers are now able to upload videos for the children - so watch out for these!!! As always, we are trying to find ways that will be accessible for the majority of



families and to establish alternatives for those who may have limited access to technology. We will hopefully have more information on this very shortly.

As we begin to phase in the wider opening of the school, there will be some other changes to Home Learning. As you know, we currently have a team of staff on site daily to provide childcare for children of keyworkers, but from the 1<sup>st</sup> June we will require a greater number of staff on site in order to support the additional children. As children will be taught in small bubbles, we will require some class teachers of other year groups to lead these 'bubble groups'. So you will find that Class Dojo posts will be looked at by other teachers, alongside the class teacher; also offering feedback on the children's work. This should ensure that the children receive regular feedback on their work to help maintain their enthusiasm for Home Learning.

We recognise that this continuing situation is a matter of huge concern to many parents; we are as keen as any to get back to doing what we aspire to be, the best possible life preparation for our children. A full return to that remains elusive but every Government announcement is analysed in depth to identify the way back to school for all.

As we have said, we feel so grateful to have such supportive parents and carers working together with us in these uncertain time. We are all looking forward to the whole Preshute community being back together!

With very best wishes,

Claire Hann-Perkins  
Head Teacher

Peter McGuigan  
Chair of Governors

Michael Scheepers  
Well-being/parent Governor

