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Headteacher: Mrs. L. Ashton

Monday 18th May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I would like to say thank you for all your support over the past few weeks. Our school family remains in my thoughts and prayers and as a school we continue to look for ways to ease any worries or concerns that some of you might have at the moment. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can help in any way by emailing ourladyoflourdes@durhamlearning.net and if you would prefer to speak to us, let us know in the email, and we will arrange to ring you. Alternatively, ring the school office, but please note the office is not always 'manned' so you may have to leave a message for us.

Following on from the Government announcement last week, some of you may be feeling anxious or unsure about the Prime Minister's proposal that Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 may possibly return to school at the earliest from June 1st followed by the other year groups by June 22nd. Your huge response to the questionnaires confirmed that there is a mix of feelings to this plan and the responses were useful to us in planning a way forward. It is important for you to note that both of these dates are dependent on government alert levels at the time and on the school's readiness to safely open its doors to more children.

Since the announcement, the school has been working closely with the Local Authority to plan for the potential opening in line with National and local advice. However, it is important to stress that before we do this, we want to be confident that the school is safe for all children, staff and parents. Over the coming days, we will continue to work on our plans in order to minimise the risks, but as you can imagine, this is a complex process and takes a great deal of time. Precautions we'll be taking include:

- Limiting class sizes
- Staggering break times, and pick-up and drop-off times
- Increased cleaning
- Keeping pupils and staff with coronavirus symptoms at home

Until you receive further information about when each year group may be invited to return, providing Government advice remains the same, the school will remain closed to all but the children of Key Workers. We will continue to provide on line learning for all the other children. I understand that this lack of clarity may be frustrating for some of you, but I want to be confident that we have the best and safest plans in place before sharing the details.

I know that whatever the near future holds for us all at Our Lady of Lourdes, we will continue to come together as 'one family', help one another and give the children all of the love and care they need to feel happy and secure.

With best wishes,

Mrs Ashton