CRESWELL C.E. INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Gypsy Lane,

Creswell,

Worksop,

Notts,

S80 4HY

Telephone 01909 721471

# Headteacher: Mrs Amanda Dodd

**Deputy Head: Mrs Samantha Cardwell**

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22nd May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers of our Foundation 1 & 2 and Year 1 children,

Further to my letter this morning, I am writing to clarify Derbyshire County Council’s position on school opening and to also forward to you their press release.

Throughout the period of lockdown, Derbyshire County Council (DCC) has remained in intensive discussion with a range of partners, including the Department for Education (DfE). Following the government’s statement regarding the reopening of schools for YR, Y1 and Y6 (as well as nursery) Derbyshire has continued to ask for clarity on some key questions, especially about the 2m social distancing issue and whether schools can use a rota system as part of their plans. Yesterday, DCC was able to confirm with the DfE that:

• the 2m social distancing issue within classrooms is essential and **schools should not plan their classroom capacity to be based on anything less than 2m social distancing.**

• rota systems are not advised since the scientific evidence is not yet secure that they are safe to use.

It is for these reasons that Derbyshire County Council have decided to advise on a phased approach for more children returning to education having undertaken all the required risk assessments.

• Phase 1 – 1st June onwards. Schools will continue to remain open for vulnerable children and children of key workers. We are expecting to welcome more children in these two groups, as key businesses reopen, whilst also planning for a wider opening of our school. Schools should not admit children from F1, F2, Y1 and Y6 unless we are certain that our risk assessments demonstrate that it is safe to do so and we can guarantee that we have sufficient space available to admit additional key worker children and vulnerable children should they wish to take up the offer of a place. Derbyshire County Council are not anticipating many primary schools being able to do so.

We intend moving from our Creswell Junior School base back to Creswell C of E Infant and Nursery as part of this phase one provision and as such will be able to increase the capacity to keyworker and vulnerable children.

• Phase 2 – Derbyshire are not identifying a date for this and this is likely to be the phase when most schools are able to increase the number of children coming back to schools from the key year groups as identified by the government.

Essentially, while the government initially stated it was not necessary to strictly adhere to the 2m social distancing requirement within schools, DCC are now stipulating this is essential. Creswell C of E Infant School had planned to reduce our class sizes to fifteen following the government guidance, and while children would be significantly distanced, they would not be two metres apart. In addition to this, we must plan to admit more vulnerable children and children of key workers (while also adhering to 2m social distancing).

Until we know the number of vulnerable children and children of key workers requiring a place, and the physical amount of space needed, we cannot, at this stage bring our Foundation 1&2 and Year 1 children back into school. We will also need to look again at the capacity of each classroom (allowing for 2m social distancing between each child) and revise our plans.

As you can see from the phase 2 guidance above, Derbyshire are currently not identifying a date when they anticipate schools will be able to increase their capacity to include Foundation 1&2 and Y1.

The Creswell team will work, over the next few weeks, to answer the current unknowns and contact you with further information, as soon as possible.

Once again, I apologise for any inconvenience caused by the timing of this announcement and I assure you, we will continue to support you and your family throughout this unprecedented time.

Stay safe and well.

Kind regards,

Amanda Dodd

Headteacher