



## BARNINGHAM CEVC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that this letter finds you well and coping in the current circumstances. I am writing to you to clarify our position at the moment and to share our plans for the remainder of this term and our aspirations for September 2020. Gavin Williamson, the Secretary of State for Education, announced last week that it was no longer possible for schools to admit more children back into schools, but this was under the discretion of the Head Teacher and the Governing Body. Mr Williamson acknowledged that full opening of primaries this term would not be possible as the requirements of social distancing, particularly the 2m rule, are too great.

As we still have to maintain social distancing within every classroom this means that we must comply with the government and, in consultation with the governors and staff, we have decided not admit any more year groups back into school. To help you understand what this looks like in practice, every one of our groups back in school is made up of a pod of up to 15 children who have a teacher and a teaching assistant allocated to them. Where we have job shares, this may mean that another adult is involved on different days of the week. However, they only work with the children and adults in that pod and no one else. Each pod also has their own midday supervisor who again has no contact with other pods - adults or children. Every pod has separate arrangements for breaks and lunchtimes (including different timings) and has designated school playground space to play in. Our Breakfast Club and After School Club are only open to the children of key workers, and only Monday to Wednesday. You can imagine how many adults this takes up as it is not simply a case that there are any empty classrooms in the school and there are no adults left to run any more pods.

Last Thursday the government confirmed that schools will not be open for childcare for the children of key workers and vulnerable children during the school holidays. This means that when we close for the summer holidays (last day for children is Friday 17 July), we really will be closed to all children, having been open almost every working day since lockdown began. This has implications for our key worker parents who have relied on us for childcare since the beginning of lockdown and now is the time for them to make plans for how their children can be looked after without us being on hand. There are calls being made for the government to fund local play schemes for children for the summer holidays, but at this moment nothing has been confirmed and no further information has been forthcoming. Again, as with childcare, there is pressure for the government to continue with food vouchers for Free School Meal children, but no statements updating schools about this have been given.

With regards to children returning to school in September, the sooner schools are informed of what is expected, the sooner we can plan for the return of all children into school. This has to start with a relaxation of social distancing rules for children so that we can fit more children into our classrooms. The relatively good news is that on 15th May, Professor Whitty said that the rate of infection for COVID-19 was 2 to 3 in 1000 people. Between 25th May and 7th June, the rate was reported to be 1 person in 1700 people – and as Professor Whitty said last week, the pandemic is shrinking, but not fast.

Our aim will be to start planning for a full return of pupils to school as quickly as possible in September since there will be a great deal to plan and prepare for so that we can welcome increased numbers of children back to school in a safe way. We are expecting the children to return on Thursday 03 September. This will be confirmed by the school before the end of term, we hope, but is dependent on the points raised already. We will contact you by text, through the school website and the Friends Facebook page when the final arrangements are in place.

To summarise the key points:

- We will not open to other year groups this term
- We do plan to close on Friday 17th July
- We shall be closed in summer holiday
- We are planning to re-open on Thursday 3rd Sept.

I am pleased that so many children are still accessing the home learning. We appreciate that in these extraordinary times everybody has had to make changes to their routines and we are very grateful for the continued support and effort that you have put into place. I am very proud of the staff and their work both in school and online and we all hope that the school will return to normal as soon and as safely as possible.

Frances Parr  
Head Teacher

Julie Surridge  
Chair of Governors

**To learn, aspire, believe and hope through our Christian faith.**

Barningham CEVC Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs Parr, the Alternate Designated Person is Mrs Pipe and the Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding is Rev Bladen. The Online Safety Lead is Mrs Smithson and the Governor with Responsibility for Online Safety is Rev Bladen.



SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL