

Newchurch Community Primary School  
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Dear parent/carer,

We are sure that you are aware of the announcements our Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, made last night regarding the changes the government is implementing. For some of you this may have caused heightened levels of anxiety and fear for your child's safety – which is expected.

As a school, we had a feeling they were about to make the announcement of Year Six returning sometime before the end of the school year to support with transition, but did not expect Reception and Year 1 to be included. After watching the announcement a number of times, the word 'may' was used which indicates that it is not definite and will be dependent on the scientific data provided. The word 'staggered' was also mentioned which probably means that not all three year groups would be expected to return at the same time. What is very clear is that this will only happen if it is safe to allow primary school children to start back at school.

On Friday, we were notified by the Local Authority that the team responsible for the education of our children in Warrington, and representative head teachers, would be having an online meeting to create a coordinated plan to make the transition back to school as safe as possible. We have been asked to wait until further detail and guidance has been communicated with us before putting any of our own plans in place. The Local Authority have been exceptional in guiding us through these challenging times and we value their support and guidance.

Although we cannot articulate the plans for returning to school, what we can do is reassure you what it may look like for each of our Newchurch robins. We appreciate that every child will have had a different experience during the school closure. They will also have varying degrees of exposure to the impact of the virus, have an individual response to working from home, and be able to identify different possible problems to coming back to school, as well as solutions. As parents, we value your partnership in communicating this to us along with your child. We will co-create the transition journey for your child, helping them to process what they have experienced, helping them to re-build relationships, deal



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with big feelings and engage in social communication – things they were able to do with ease prior to the lockdown. Once we have more guidance, we will engage with each family to work out the best approach for your child.

We have thought long and hard about what the curriculum will look like when the children return and we would like to include you as parents in this journey of recovery. We believe that the children's mental health is the most vital thing to support when they return to us and have been looking at the work of Barry Carpenter, CBE, Professor of Mental Health in Education, who talks about a 'recovery curriculum'. If you would like to find out more please visit:

<https://www.evidenceforlearning.net/recoverycurriculum/>

The Prime Minister also talked about people going back to work if they are unable to work from home. As you are aware, we have been providing childcare for our keyworkers since the school closure and will continue to do so. We are hoping to receive further guidance on this as more parents going back to work may impact on the numbers requiring childcare, which will impact on the safety of the keyworker children and staff. Please could we ask that you listen to the message that if you can work from home, you continue to do so and also continue to respect the decisions made by us as a school when deciding who requires child care.

We are sure, like us, you have many questions floating around your head following the announcement. We need time to process what we have heard, await further guidance and then make informed choices about what will be the best approach for the children and families of Newchurch. Once we have more information, we will communicate it to you but please be assured your child's safety is the most important factor in their return to school. In the meantime, it is business as usual.

You have done an amazing job home schooling your children and we are so grateful to you for working in partnership with us throughout these challenging times. We just need to hope that people will follow the rules so we can be together as a whole school when it is safe to do so.

Keep safe,



Mrs J Narraway

Head Teacher



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