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 **Friday 12th June 2020**

Dear Families,

**Wider School Re-opening Update**

As previously stated, we intend to conduct a formal risk assessment review next week, as to whether we have capacity to safely admit any more children into school before the summer break.

It has now been confirmed that schools are responsible for determining if an offer of return can be made to year groups 2, 3, 4 and 5. At Westgarth, unfortunately we simply do not have capacity, in terms of the number of physical rooms and toilets required, and available staff to offer any school based provision for these year groups before the summer break. We are truly sorry that this is the case, but the government’s ambition was simply unrealistic, given the safety guidelines to which we must adhere.

In terms of provision for the designated year groups: Nursery, Reception, Y1 and Y6, we have now reached **full capacity in Nursery and Y1.**

However, we may have some capacity for additional children in existing “bubbles” in year groups **Reception and Y6**, subject to the risk assessment review.

To support this review of our provision until the summer break, we need to gather information about whether any additional parents/carers of children in **Reception or Y6** would intend their child to return to school, no earlier than **w/c 22nd June**, if it were an option. Separate letters will be sent to eligible families by Parentmail to this effect.

In addition, we will be assessing any additional demand amongst children deemed vulnerable, and children of critical workers with no alternative childcare– provision for these children has always, and continues to be, the main priority in government guidance. If demand in this group exceeds the capacity of our current provision, **this will take precedence over any additional admissions in Reception and Y6.**



**Home Learning Update**

The vast majority of teachers able to work in school are now teaching in groups, supporting key worker and vulnerable children; Nursery; Reception; Y1 and Y6. Each small group has a high adult:child ratio (the equivalent of 3 full time staff) as the children do not leave their groups over break and lunchtime and each group needs staffing for First Aid, toilet supervision and continual cleaning of classroom equipment. This involves staff from every year group, including the teachers and teaching assistants from years 2 to 5.

This high staffing ratio in classrooms does affect our capacity to concurrently support home, as well as classroom, learning. However, we are working hard to maintain our home learning offer for all year groups in light of gaining some clarity about the school’s position until the summer break.

Our overriding aim throughout lockdown has been to support families in difficult circumstances to prioritise the wellbeing of children, as well as adult family members trying to juggle challenging circumstances. Whilst we will always maintain that your child’s wellbeing overrides all other priorities, we will be reviewing our home learning provision to offer some additional options for those families who may have capacity to support more formal activities. These activities may appear as additional attachments or be added to Purple Mash accounts in year groups 3 to 5. However, please do not feel under any undue pressure. We know that many of you have complex circumstances at home - juggling home learning, working (either at home or back in your workplace) and, often, additional care responsibilities outside of your household. Any additional activities are optional.

For year groups in which some children are attending school, please be reassured that, as far as possible, the learning in school will match the learning being sent home. In Y6, this will involve some additional transition activities.

Class teachers will offer an update welfare call over the next week, or so; please do let us know of any circumstances specific to your family, particularly if you feel that there is any further support we can offer.



We miss the children hugely, and, look forward to when we can be reunited fully as a school community.

With our very best wishes to you all. Stay safe!

Mrs J Woodhead

Headteacher