



18<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

After the announcements from the Government last week about schools returning in June, there have been many further announcements, debates and differences in opinions across the media. We have been trying to pull all of that information together and make decisions about what type of provision we could offer from 1st June onwards.

I have had many meetings with representatives of Birmingham City Council, Special Needs Transport and Birmingham Public Health and below I have detailed what we feel is the right way to move forward.

We now need some information from you to help us make preparations for increasing the school numbers further. We will continue to base our increase in numbers on the risk assessments our staff teams are carrying out on a weekly basis. The vulnerability of the students and their families will be used to work out the gradual increase in numbers and not specific year groups as you will have seen described in the media for the reopening of mainstream schools.

Special Schools have slightly different criteria and I have copied the section from the Government guidance below:

special schools, special post-16 institutions and hospital schools to work towards a phased return of more children and young people without a focus on specific year groups and informed by risk assessments.

We are also conscious that some of you will now have been asked to return to work under the new guidelines and therefore may be struggling to manage your childcare arrangements if your child is still at home. For this reason, we have asked some questions below about your current work arrangements.

We would also like to know whether you would like your child to return to school in June, if we have the capacity. This is the only way we can plan and then guarantee the correct numbers of staff and facilities to keep your child safe. As I mentioned in my previous letter, we cannot guarantee social distancing as some of the students cannot comprehend this principle. Therefore, we would like to know

whether you would send your child in if we offered a place from 1st June onwards. I must stress that saying 'yes' will not guarantee your child starting school again on 1st June as it will be a slow and steady process getting the school back up to higher numbers on site. We would still need to operate the system we are currently using where we inform you if your child can return. What we now need to know is would you send your child into school if you were offered a place? I know as a parent of 3 children myself, this is a very difficult decision to make, but we would like to gather some information to know what your thoughts are on this matter.

We also know that the number of pupils Special Needs Transport will be able to transport will be an issue when we start to increase numbers. We currently have a large number of buses bringing one or two pupils at a time into school to maintain social distancing. Special Needs Transport have been very honest that they would probably only be able to transport a third of their usual numbers of pupils. Therefore, we have asked below whether you would be able to transport your child into school if needed.

We are slowly and safely going to increase numbers and we ask for your continued patience and support with this. Whether your child does come back into the school building, or continues to do their schooling at home, I can assure you that the whole staff team at Mayfield are working very long hours to provide the best schooling we can in very challenging circumstances.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'si', written in a cursive style.

Simon Harris

(Interim Headteacher, Mayfield School)