



5<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I thought it would be helpful to give you an update on where we are with our schools.

Thank goodness, we are finally open for more children to come to school. It's been really great to see the children and staff this week and we are only sorry that we can't accommodate everyone. Some of you will be very pleased as your children are back in school and they have come home happy having settled back in quickly. For the rest it is, no doubt, frustrating. I can't imagine what it's like if you have some children returning to class and siblings still at home champing at the bit and fed up of home learning.

We have had our own frustrations. We have spent time making meticulous plans only for the Government to change things at the last minute. Since schools were opened more widely, we have had 41 different sets of guidance. On Monday morning further guidance arrived relating to critical workers' children meaning further changes. What the Government has requested and publicised is simply not achievable in the majority of our schools because the revised guidance for critical workers and vulnerable children has implications for all other children. For example one of our schools has 13 "bubbles" just for the critical worker children.

We must fulfil all the requirements relating to health and safety, social distancing, 'safe bubbles', hygiene and safe movement around our schools. In addition, we must prioritise the full-time return of the children of critical workers and children who are vulnerable. This means in many schools we cannot accommodate children from any other year groups next week. In some schools we simply do not have enough rooms. In others not enough staff. This is a source of great stress for our Headteachers and I'm so sorry we are in this situation. As far as you are concerned, your Headteacher will be in touch explaining their circumstances and which year, if any, can attend school next. I thank you for supporting your school as they grapple with this.

I know from some of the emails you have sent me, that ensuring that year 6 leave their Primary education on a high is a priority. This is an important rite of passage and an entitlement for all children. We will ensure that all year 6 children will at some point be back in their primary school before the end of term to celebrate their time there and say proper goodbyes. We will do so face to face (not zooming!) and give it the investment it deserves. I promise you this will happen.

When I last wrote to you, I asked you not to give the Headteachers a hard time about the present situation. Thank you so much for taking this on board. You have no idea how much your support and kindness has meant to them and how much easier this whole situation has been made by working with such a positive and caring community. I hope my next letter will contain good news about more children returning to school. In the meantime, please persevere with the home learning and do not worry about children getting behind. We have plans in place to ensure everyone catches up.

Thanks again and God bless you and your families.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ani Magill', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the left.

Ani Magill  
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