Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: possible reopening of school to more pupils in June

Firstly, I would want to offer my condolences to any of our families who have lost loved ones during this terrible Covid-19 virus. We are really upset that for some of our children, life will not be the same again and it is our heartfelt intention, from everyone at Heath Mount Primary, that we will always do our very best to support these children and their families in whatever way we can.

Thank you all for your support, patience and genuine care for us all at Heath Mount Primary. The ways many of you have shown gratitude to our staff has been very heart-warming and it is so reassuring to know how much you value their efforts. We cannot say how much this has meant to us and how this is keeping us going, particularly when we are having to make very difficult decisions on a daily basis.

I am really proud of our staff who have worked their hardest to make sure that your child’s school has been a welcoming and happy place for the most vulnerable families and for children of our critical care workers during the lockdown. They have been amazing. Our staff have been out and about in the local area delivering home learning packs to all our families. This sort of impressive dedication is the hallmark of Heath Mount Primary and I cannot overstate my gratitude.

I know you’ve seen in the news that schools are beginning to reopen on from the 1st June to reception, year 1 and year 6 pupils. At Heath Mount Primary, we are considering the views of parents and children in any of our planning. Thank you for your contributions on the parent view questionnaire and the children’s view questionnaire.

It’s a very unsettling time for us all, but rest assured that we’re going to be doing everything we can to make sure we’re ready to receive children from the 8th June onwards. We are currently considering which year group would be offered a return to school and will let you know next week, this will depend on safety factors and the views of all our parents, staff and children.

We have created a detailed action plan that we’ll share with you as soon as possible so you know what the school’s reopening will look like in practice. Precautions we’ll be taking include:

- Limiting class sizes
- Staggering break times, and pick-up and drop-off times
- Increased cleaning
- Keeping pupils and staff with coronavirus symptoms at home
School will not look the same from the 8th June 2020 - these are some of the many requirements already in place:

- children will be taught in groups of 9 maximum (this means that they may not be with their class teacher or all of their friends or even in their classroom) and they may be taught at times by a teaching assistant
- children will be expected to remain within the same group (the Government often refer to this as their ‘bubble’) and this will be in class and at lunch and playtimes, they will not be able to mix with other ‘bubbles’
- in order to keep every child safe, they will be expected to remain in their particular ‘zone’ of the school – all children will be trained in knowing this
- children will not be in full time – in order for all children to be in school in groups of around 9 our schools would need between 36-42 classrooms! We only have 14 classrooms. To begin with this will be mornings only.
- there will be staggered start and finish times for different groups of children
- where weather allows, children will spend time outside as long as it is safe which might include eating their lunch and this will be in their zones
- there will be an expectation of very increased and frequent hand washing in every session
- lunch and break time will be staggered for every class to keep 2m social distancing possible
- the curriculum and learning activities will be very different for the children as all soft toys, cushions, wooden toys, sand trays, etc have been removed
- the sharing of reading books will be very carefully managed with covers wiped and time gaps before any exchange

If your child is clinically extremely vulnerable, or living with someone who is in this group, they should not come back to school and should continue home learning. I want to reassure you that we’re not going to be pressuring anyone to send their children to school. We’ll keep you updated with all our preparations for making sure the school is as safe as possible, so you can make an informed decision. There will be no letters or chasing of attendance and no fines.

We'd like to thank you for your continuous support in helping your child learn from home. We'll keep you updated once we know more.

If your child will remain at home beyond 8th June, we'll continue to support you and them with home learning, and meal support for those eligible. Please do continue to stay in touch with us about how your child is getting on.

If you have any questions, please contact Mrs D Fance at d.fance@heathmount.bham.sch.uk, telephone the school office on 0121 464 1691 or Mrs Fance’s work mobile on 07507383504.

Warm regards,

Mrs D.Fance
Headteacher