

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents / Carers and Families,

### School update

I am sure you are aware of the Government's announcement that they would like to aim for schools to begin to open for more pupils from the week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> June.

In terms of special schools, we have been asked to work towards a phased return for more children and young people which will be informed by risk assessments instead of year groups (as is the case for mainstream schools).

We are now working hard to make the necessary arrangements to welcome more children back to school on a part time basis and to provide a safe environment for the full school community, which reflects government guidance.

As part of our planning we are considering how we can most effectively use our school site to maintain social distancing whilst continuing to provide a safe, creative and positive learning environment.

It is likely that staffing ratios and physical limitations of the building will mean that all pupils will not be able to be on site at the same time. For this reason we will aim to offer a combination of part time places in school with remote learning opportunities, as appropriate; offers of placements are also likely to be staggered to allow us to ensure that systems and staffing ratios are keeping everyone safe.

When we have completed our planning for the re-opening of the school we will contact you again with regards to the opening date and the education and transport arrangements for your child/young person if they are prioritised for return.

I am aware that this will be an anxious time for parents/carers and children/young people and would like to reassure you that I will be putting in place additional procedures to enhance cleaning regimes throughout the day and to reinforce good hygiene and handwashing. Staff have access to PPE as required in accordance with the guidance received. The school day will also be arranged to minimise contact with others outside of the identified class groups and visitors to school will be minimised.

I will provide more detail on these preventative measures in future correspondence and would like to reassure you that we take all necessary actions to maintain a safe environment in all areas of school.

In order to help us with our planning I would be grateful if you could talk to us about your individual situation and whether you would want your child/young person to return at this time. This information will help us with our planning. If you choose to keep your child/young

person at home, regular contact with your child's/young person's teacher will be maintained.

I want to take this opportunity to thank those of you who have already had these discussions with your child's/young person's class teacher. Please be assured that they have passed your comments on to me and you are most welcome to contact me at school to discuss further if you would like to. I would be grateful for any further discussions of this nature, either with myself, via the contact form on the school website ([www.thedalesschool.org](http://www.thedalesschool.org)) or with your child's/young person's class teacher by Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May.

I have attached the link to the latest DfE guidance for parents and carers which can be found below. Please take some time to read it as it provides important information about returning to school

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

I will contact you again in due course to provide further information about the wider opening of the school and specific arrangements for your child/young person.

Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Ann-Marie Ellis  
Headteacher