



## “A Safe Branch from Which to Soar”

14 May 2020

Dear parents and carers,

### Response required to an invitation to return to school

As you all know from my previous email communications, there is a plan set by the government that schools ‘could’ re-open from 1st June. The Department for Education have issued guidance on reopening and more guidance seems to be coming daily at the moment. Alongside this, Cumbria County Council are providing a ‘Cumbria response’ to the government’s proposals.

What myself and the governors, working closely with you, our families, must do in the coming days and weeks is look at our own situation – for Shap CE Primary School – the capacity for reopening and the safety of all involved: children, families, staff, staff families and the wider community, based on our knowledge of our school community and premises.

The government have specified that Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children are the first to be reintroduced to school. As well as this, we also have an obligation to continue to provide childcare to those families who are ‘critical workers’ and to vulnerable children. This has up until now been serviced by the ‘Brunswick Hub’ for our children. However, this will come to an end with the proposed re-opening of schools. Therefore, we at Shap CE School will have to think very carefully about how we balance the needs of childcare for any critical workers, the capacity for staffing and the organisational management of some children coming back.

I think you will all be aware that, in coming back to school, it will not be school as we have previously known. The advice from the government is that children are to be taught in small groups and those groups are to be separated from other groups – like ‘social bubbles’. Also, your child may not have their class teacher ‘teaching’ them, nor will they be able to socialise in the same ways as we have in our ‘old normal’ school day. Lunch times, play times, outdoor times, drop offs and pick-ups, depending on how many children attend, will all have to be staggered and carefully monitored and controlled.

In regard to ‘social distancing’, the guidance from the DfE clearly states the measures to be used: Early Years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2m apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to early years and schools, we are taking this into account. Schools should therefore work through a hierarchy of measures: • Avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms • Frequent hand cleaning and good hygiene practices • Regular cleaning of settings • Minimising contact and mixing.

Therefore, the 2m social distancing rule is not expected to be adhered to within the school setting and the government have taken this into account when making these plans. Also, there are no plans for the use of additional PPE within school settings above that which will be needed if a child or adult starts to display symptoms whilst on the premises.



SCHOOL  
MEMBER

KIDSAFE UK  
Registered School

I shall put a plan together, but before doing so, I need additional information from yourselves. You may well have your own views about your children coming back to school – understandably so. Every family situation is different: health concerns, work commitments and so on...

**For parents of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6:** I need to know if you are planning to send your child(ren) to school if a suitable plan is in place, or whether you will choose to keep your children at home. The DfE have stated that penalties will not be enforced if you choose to keep your children at home. We, at Shap CE School will endeavour to carry on providing 'Home School Learning' and that the work provided will be the same, wherever your child may be i.e. fact to face, or remotely. We will also take the opportunity to utilise this time to review our homelearning procedures as part of this process.

**For parents who are key workers:** I need to know if you will need your child(ren) looked after during the school day. If so, on what days.

**Please can you email [head@shap.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:head@shap.cumbria.sch.uk) to let us know your intentions – either way – by the end of FRIDAY 15th May.**

I hope you trust that our team at Shap CE School will take every precaution, create Risk Assessments, use guidance from the DfE, the LA and our Health and Safety Consultants and use good old common sense, when coming up with plans.

If you have any questions, worries or concerns or would like to chat through any of this, please email me [head@shap.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:head@shap.cumbria.sch.uk)

We will work through this together, and ensure that the welfare of our children, families and staff is at the heart of the decision making.

Kind Regards,

*Katie Chappell*

Acting Headteacher

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