LONG MEADOW SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mr Philip Gray BEd (Hons) CANTAB, NPQH

Friday 15 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As ever it has been an amazingly busy week at LMS: firstly with the launch of Google Classroom and then the fallout of the Prime Minister's announcement on Sunday.

**Google classroom**

Our launch has been brilliant! Thank you for all of your positive feedback. As predicted, the interaction and contact with children has made it all worthwhile. All of the teachers have loved messaging and supporting you all this week and seeing all of the wonderful learning you have been completing- long may it continue.

There were a few technical glitches however. It appears that due to all staff sending out login emails at the same time, on the same system, some failed to send! However, those parents who didn't receive their login emailed the Mr G IT Support Desk (AKA The Emergency@ email) and have them now. Also some of the Google generated passwords used characters rarely used and hard to find on the keyboard, again we sorted this out. However, some parents had difficulty logging in mainly due to copying and pasting the details. The problem is doing this sometimes copies spaces which the system didn't like. For those who havent accessed Google Classroom yet, please email emergency@longmeadow and we can sort these out for you. Also if you have changed your child's password, please ensure you have this written down, and where possible your child has it or knows it. We cannot see passwords, only change them which is a big job.

Finally, we have been listening to your feedback and will be continuing with the learning on the school website as well as on Google classroom each week, we hope this helps.These as ever can be found at [www.longmeadow.milton-keynes.sch.uk](http://www.longmeadow.milton-keynes.sch.uk).

**Proposed School Opening 1st June 2020- EYFS, Year 1 and Year 6 ONLY**

Following on from the Prime Minister's announcement last Sunday, and my letter to you on Tuesday, the School Leadership Team have been working tirelessly all week on preparing a plan to be able to share with you as soon as we could. However the creation of this plan has been challenging on a number of levels. This included new guidance being published last night after our school had been planning all week. **Please note however that this is still subject to government data on the spread of the disease.**

Firstly, can I begin by reminding everyone that, although as school, we have been closed to most pupils, we have remained open to some. I want to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to my incredibly dedicated and hardworking staff. I am incredibly proud to have them as my team, they have worked tirelessly to provide for those families who have needed our COVID-19 Childcare provision and at the same time evolve an online home learning community with our classes at speed.

We now seem to be at a point in time where we face our next significant challenges and hurdles. I am in no doubt that by working together; and supporting each other, we can overcome these and make the very best of the situation.

We wish to be open and honest with parents about the challenges we are facing in expanding the number of pupils attending, especially as ensuring the safety of pupils, staff and families remains paramount throughout. The key to this is putting into place, as far as possible, social distancing at all times. You can hopefully understand the difficulty of this with the restrictions of space, safety of all and age of the children. However, from the very start, we wish to let you know that we are unable to guarantee that this will be possible, in particular within EYFS. It is clear that every school will have different challenges depending on numbers of pupils, numbers of available staff, size of premises and so on. The plans we make will have to reflect the particular challenges we face at LMS.

The guidance also states clearly that there will be no penalty for non-attendance. Therefore, if you decide that you do not wish your child to attend at this time, we understand this and our current attendance policy will not apply.

Due to having to put in safe social distancing in the school, we have had to try to look at who we can safely accommodate in school at one time, alongside how we can do this safely. The government have asked us to prioritise the order in which we do this. As guided by the government, our final solution will prioritise Critical worker children/vulnerable children not in eligible years groups, then EYFS, year 1 and lastly year 6, in that order.

We have had to risk assess how many children we are able to safely have on site. The Government has stipulated a maximum of 15 children per group, however our classrooms, with appropriate, consistent 2m social dancing, cannot hold this many. This means that we either have to have smaller group sizes or little or no social distancing measures. We believe the latter is unsafe.

Our school will be a VERY different place for parents and children who choose to come back to school. The list below is just a few things that will be different to ‘normal’, but we wanted to share to help inform your decision about sending your child back to school;

* It is more than likely that your child will not be in their own/usual classroom. Your child may be in a room not currently designated for their Key Stage
* It is more than likely that your child will not have their usual teacher, it could be any member of staff from across the school
* Your child will be in a small group/bubble with the same children and the same staff at all times
* Your child is more than likely to be in a group with at least some children who are not part of their friendship group
* These groups and bubbles will have no contact with other children or staff before, during or after school. This includes at breaks and lunchtimes
* Start and finish times will be staggered for year groups. Although these will fall within our usual school day, they will not be the normal timings
* We are hoping to be able to provide a packed lunch for those who require a school meal. There will no hot dinners available
* Our ‘curriculum’ will be very different, but will be as closely aligned as possible to the Google Classroom which children not attending will be accessing i.e the access to the learning will be the same.
* There will be no contact on the school site before or after school. We will be operating a one way system around the outside of the school building as children will be spread across the whole school site
* We may have to look at implementing a gradual or staggered return to ensure we can operate safely. This could include split weeks or alternative weeks for groups/years.

Some options may allow us to;

* Keep groups of children and adults together and prevent wider mixing
* Consider the key times of the day when social distancing could be more difficult
* Enable deep cleaning
* Enable remote learning for those who are not in school to continue.

Some of this information may seem blunt to parents, but it is the only way in which we can keep everyone in our school community safe with the proposed opening. We just want you to know what we have been doing, the thinking behind what we may do and ensure you have as much information as possible to make the decision of whether you wish to send your child back to school. What I can guarantee is that every member of staff at LMS is and has been totally committed to the wellbeing and safety of the children since we closed.

Due to this, we need to collect some information to support our detailed planning over the coming days. We are asking ALL parents, regardless of what year group their child is in to complete our survey which can be found at:

[**https://forms.gle/oZMDfaQLWf4Mh7hs6**](https://forms.gle/oZMDfaQLWf4Mh7hs6)

This information will enable us to begin to finalise our plans and be able to communicate them to you. Please note that the survey will close at 10am next Monday 18th May. Please, please, please take the short amount of time to complete it, it will really make a difference.

Stay safe, look after each other and try to enjoy the sunshine this weekend

Yours sincerely

Mr Gray

Head Teacher