

Dear Parent and Carers

After last week's announcement you can probably imagine the amount of work, research and analysing of guidance that has happened this week, not to mention the anxiety levels that have risen across our whole school community. Thank you to all of you who have been in touch during the week with messages of support and many apologies to those of you that have been in touch, but for whom we have no answers yet.

We acknowledge that it is difficult for you too, our community, to make clear decisions about work schedules, what to do for the best or even whether you would want to send your child to school in the current climate of risk. I noticed today, the level of new cases of coronavirus in York are still high.

As always, it is very important for us to be open and honest and share what we know so far and keep you abreast of the advice and guidance we are following that is being updated almost daily.

For a school the size of Robert Wilkinson, we will need to consider and risk assess our plans safely and cautiously where staff, pupil and community safety is put first and foremost with no compromise.

For those who wish to read up on key Government Guidance, I am adding pertinent documents to our website [here](#). I am not going to put every link here as it is a cure for insomnia, but many other links are contained within each Government document.

There are certain principles that are very clear.

1. The Government has asked schools to work towards providing a provision which allows parents of identified groups of pupils to get back to work, whilst minimising risk as much as is humanly possible, to our pupils, staff and community.
2. This new provision may be phased in from Monday 1st June **if** the data allows.
3. The government has created some very clear guidance that we as a school must follow and they have also recognised that *'all schools are different, and it is not possible for the government to set specific national guidelines that could be universally applicable'*.
4. The Government guidance is quite clear that children are to be put into small groups (dependent on the safe size of the room space available in order to follow social distancing rules) and that group mixing is to be kept to a minimum. So each group will have their own timetable, staggered start times and set break times throughout the day. They will play, work and eat with their group minimising mixing with other children wherever possible. Therefore it is likely that the children will not be with their class teacher.
5. The Government has given a clear order of priority for places at the new provision.
  - A) Pupils who are classed as vulnerable.
  - B) Pupils who have a parent who qualifies as a critical worker - guidance [here](#) (please note that this now applies if only **one** parent is a critical worker)
  - C) Nursery (Foundation Stage 1 - FS1)
  - D) Early Years (Foundation Stage 2 - FS2 - Ocean/Space/Jungle)
  - E) Year 1
  - F) Year 6

Guidance will most likely continue to be released over the coming days, but I hope you all feel that you share with us the current situation as it is at this moment in time. Even reading this may help some of you make some decisions or to be able to work out if you may qualify for a place.

We would like you to still be cautious about what you say to children in FS1&2, Year 1 and Year 6 and not make any promises about their return to school and how this will look until we are clear as a school.

Next week, we will measure our room spaces carefully to gauge our capacity and begin to make contact with the first of the family groups (Group A and B above).

At this point, you are as up to date as we are.

I do wish to finish on a very positive note.

We know here at Robert Wilkinson that our systems for home schooling this past few weeks have developed really successfully and this is due to your commitment to this journey and the relationships you have built with our staff. Thank you for all your support, it is very much appreciated.

The Government is clearly stating that we must support parental preference through this Covid National Health Crisis to allow you as parents to exercise your legal right to keep your child educated at home.

We will endeavour to continue our commitment to **home learning for all** as long as we have enough staff to run it effectively. We appreciate that this keeps your child safe, in a stable consistent routine and keeps learning fluid.

I hope this helps, have a lovely weekend and thank you once again for your understanding.

Kind regards

Chris Evans