

Tameside Metropolitan Borough  
St Anne's Primary School



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19 May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I wrote to you last week following the Government's announcement about the conditional re-opening of schools for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children. Since then, it has become clear how ambitious this aim is, especially given the fragile and conflicting nature of the scientific advice surrounding transmission rates in children. This has led to a natural unease in the teaching profession and considerable anxiety about a significant increase in the number of children in schools.

It is important to recognise that the Government's aim is for schools to begin opening further **from** 1 June and not necessarily **on** 1 June. I can also confirm that Tameside has amended this date to **8 June**, which is after our half term break. Whilst we are keen to return to some form of normality, this must be done in a way that ensures the safety of children, staff, families and everyone in our community. It should be remembered that Government guidance is exactly that, guidance, and ultimately, the decision to extend opening is for the school's Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Board. Such decisions can only be made following a detailed assessment of risk that is constantly updated as circumstances change.

Even when school is in a position to accept more pupils it will look very different to when we closed on 20 March 2020. As previously stated, it is critical that we are able to implement a way of working that keeps everyone safe. As a result, some of the possible scenarios that are being considered include:

- Classes in year groups to start the new phasing in at different times to allow school to manage the transition and to check our new systems are working.
- Class sizes will be greatly reduced to smaller groups to aid with social distancing.
- Those groups will not be able to mix.
- As a consequence of the above, pupils may be taught by different adults than normal.
- No large group gatherings such as assemblies.
- The number of hours in school may be reduced.
- Start and finish times to be staggered to ensure the social distancing of adults.
- Break and lunchtimes to be staggered and timings amended to ensure groups do not mix.
- Additional times for personal handwashing and toileting to avoid the mix of groups.
- The timetable and curriculum to be modified.
- An understanding that social distancing will be encouraged **but cannot** be guaranteed amongst young children.

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I am continuing to work through all the information that is being provided at a national and local level to support the potential re-opening of St Anne's. However, every school is different, with each having a different layout and staffing levels. These will need to be carefully taken into consideration in any risk assessment and resulting plan.

**In the next few days I will be writing to parents of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children to outline my plans for a wider opening. We will also survey these parents to ascertain how many children are likely to return to school.**

As I have been doing since the start of the crisis, I will continue to keep you informed of the developing situation and how it may affect your child. In the meantime, children should carry on accessing the home learning activities we have made available.

I wish you all well and look forward to a time in the future when school life can safely return to some sort of normality.

Yours sincerely

Kirsty Rimmer  
Headteacher