

MARDEN PRIMARY ACADEMY
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Headteacher: Miss M Newton BEd (Hons)

Wednesday 27th May 2020

Dear parents and carers,

There is still much debate about the wider reopening of schools from 1st June. The government is still proposing that many English schools will be open on Monday to pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. On Sunday 24th May, Boris Johnson acknowledged that a 1st June opening may not be possible for all schools. He was clear that there will need to be a degree of local flexibility in the way in which schools open to more pupils. Indeed, we have received confirmation from Herefordshire Local Authority that the decision to reopen will be left with individual schools.

When I wrote to you a few weeks ago, I outlined how we would manage the risks when it came to widening the opening of our schools.

At that time four key conditions were set that would need to be met before we would open; they are listed below.

Opening is conditional on the following conditions being met:

- **Gavin Williamson (Secretary of State for Education) has stated that Test, Track and Trace will be in place. It will need to be.**
- **The five key tests stated by the government will need to be met in Herefordshire (not nationally).**
- **The government releases the data that proves that this is a safe strategy. There has been no assurance that children returning from school will not put members of their family at risk.**
- **The R number remains below 1. We are yet to see the effect of the easing of the lockdown.**

Condition one has not been met. There is currently no system to test, track and trace.

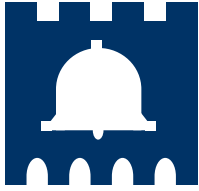
Condition two has not been met. There are currently approximately 1500 symptomatic cases in Herefordshire. There will be more non symptomatic cases which remain unidentified because of the lack of widespread testing.

Condition three has not been met. The independent SAGE report that was published on Friday 22nd May outlines that by delaying the wider opening of schools the risk of the spread of infection decreases substantially. If delayed by two weeks (to 15th June) the risk is approximately halved.

Condition four is met at this point.

I fully accept that re-opening is a low risk venture for pupils but it remains high risk for staff in the school and for adults at home. Parents and carers are vulnerable as they will inevitably be in close contact with their children.





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I am committed to getting children back into school but not at the expense of the safety of their families.

I promised that I would inform you today of the decision of whether we will be opening to pupils in the named year groups on 1st June. As the conditions have not been met I feel that we are unable to do this safely. This decision has not been made lightly and is fully supported by the governing body. We will regularly review the conditions listed above and will reopen as soon as it is safe to do so. If the government does not provide test track and trace we will need the number of cases in Herefordshire to reduce before we will reopen. The governing body accepts the advice given on the SAGE report and we aim to open on the 15th June, unless there is evidence of a heightened risk preventing us to do so.

I will write to you next Wednesday to keep you updated.

In the meantime, if there is any way that we can help you, please do not hesitate to contact us via admin@marden.hereford.sch.uk

Yours sincerely

M Newton
Headteacher

