



The John Hampden School Wendover



NEWSLETTER

1. MESSAGE FROM MRS BARNES

I have already sent letters to you this week, following the announcement last Sunday that there should be a phased re-opening of schools from June 1st, and I am grateful to the parents of our EY, FS and Year 1 pupils who have already responded by emailing us to let us know whether they anticipate their child returning to school soon after half term, all being well. We would really appreciate hearing from you by 3.30pm on Monday 18th May because the plans we need to devise are very dependent on the numbers of children we are catering for. I do appreciate that this may not be an easy decision for you to make and you must do what you feel comfortable with—home learning will continue to be available for those who do not return to school and there is no obligation to send your child back at this time if you have reservations.

I, along with the rest of the leadership team at the school, have been working to try and visualize what the potential re-opening of John Hampden will look like, following the guidance that has been issued to us. What strikes me is the need for us to carefully manage expectations and it will be necessary for you, as parents of our pupils, to support us with this. I recognise that our pupils will be missing their friends and the teaching staff at the school and the prospect, for some, of being able to come back has probably caused excitement. However, it was clearly stated that schools would not re-open after half term if the five key tests set out by the government are not met by this time. The close contact between children and their peers is a part of 'normal' school life and teaching staff are used to sitting close to children to support them with their learning. Unfortunately this type of closeness is not appropriate at the moment and cannot be a feature of school life when we re-open. Over the years we have worked hard to provide a learning environment that is irresistible to young children and we are fortunate to have a wide range of equipment and resources to engage and motivate our pupils. However, the guidance we have received suggests that classrooms will need to look very different and the resources we can use will be limited to ensure extremely high standards of cleanliness and hygiene are maintained. As parents you may have enjoyed the social nature of the 'school gate' but socially distanced queuing when bringing or collecting your children is not something we have been used to.

So, let's work together to manage expectations by:



- Not promising children that they will be back in class on Monday 1st June
- Making sure we don't give anyone the impression that going back to school will mean school will look, or be, the same as it was before the lockdown
- Telling children that we will all carry on reminding them to wash their hands and keep their distance when school re-opens

Hard messages, I know, but we need to be realistic. If we manage expectations carefully now we will perhaps avoid any unnecessary upset or disappointment.

On a brighter note, I'm so pleased to hear that many of you have enjoyed our five minutes of YouTube fame—we are really missing you all.

I hope you have a peaceful weekend—take care of yourselves.