



Highfield Primary School

Wright Street

CHORLEY

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Dear Parent/Carer

As you will know for the past 2 weeks, we have been working on a plan to reopen school to children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from 1<sup>st</sup> June. Measures had been put in place to create a safe environment for pupils and staff and we were ready.

However, last night Lancashire County Council advised schools not to open to more pupils from 1<sup>st</sup> June. They assessed the government's five tests to the easing of lockdown restrictions to see how they apply in Lancashire. The government's five tests are outlined below:

- Protect the NHS's ability to cope. We must be confident that we are able to provide sufficient critical care and specialist treatment right across the UK.
- See a sustained and consistent fall in the daily death rates from Covid-19 so we are confident that we have moved beyond the peak
- See that the rate of infection is decreasing to manageable **levels** across the board, although we don't see the results of all tests in a timely manner. In addition, we are starting to see social distancing not being followed everywhere across the county which poses the risk of new cases to rise.
- Be confident that the range of operational challenges, including testing capacity and PPE, are in hand, with supply able to meet future demand.
- Be confident that any adjustments to the current measures will not risk a second peak of infections that overwhelms the NHS.

Locally, Lancashire are currently able to meet the requirements of the first three tests; however, they do not meet the requirements for the final two tests. The test and trace programme is not at a state of readiness to respond to Covid-19 community setting outbreaks in a timely manner, which poses a risk to school environments.

Furthermore, they are not confident that adjustments to the current measures of the lockdown policy will not risk a second peak of infections locally.

The advice has been issued by the Director of Public Health for Lancashire County Council, Dr Sakthi Karunathini and as this is a health matter as a school we feel we must follow this advice. **HIGHFIELD WILL NOT BE OPEN TO PUPILS IN RECEPTION, YEAR 1 AND YEAR 6 ON 1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE.** I know this news will get a mixed reaction. There will be parents who had decided not to send their children back that feel vindicated, others who were undecided and will be glad they do not have to make a decision and those that will be disappointed that we are for the moment unable to start to return to some form of normality.



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There is no one more desperate for our children to return than me. I am worried about the education and wellbeing of the children whilst they are missing months of schooling. We miss the children and really want them back as soon as is possible. Lancashire County Council will regularly review the situation so that schools can reopen to more pupils as soon as it is safe to do so. As soon as we are told this is the case **we are ready** and the plans already drawn up will be put into place.

In the meantime, home learning will continue to be provided and school will remain open to our 'valuable' pupils, which is what we call our vulnerable children, and those of key workers. If you feel that your child fits into one of these categories, please contact school and we can discuss whether a place can be offered.

Please continue to check our Facebook page, website and newsletter where I will keep you informed of any updates.

Thank you for your continuing support during this challenging time. Continue to follow the government advice of staying alert by:

- Staying at home as much as possible.
- Working from home if you can.
- Limit contact with other people.
- Keep a 2m distance from other people.
- Wash your hands regularly.

Regards

Mr Proctor



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