

11th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

You may have heard the Prime Minister's briefing last night. Boris Johnson indicated that the government believes it may be in a position to implement a phased reopening of schools from 1st June. In his speech, he talked about a conditional plan that would start with Reception, Y1 and Y6.

From a St Aloysius perspective, we have a variety of scenarios planned. I appreciate that many of you will have specific questions that you want to be answered as quickly as possible, however I am going to ask for a continuation of your patience and support. As soon as we have some specifics from the Government on how Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children may return to school, then the actual planning work can be shared. Currently, there are so many unknowns.

What is clear is that this will not be school as it was just a few months ago; we are expecting to have significantly reduced classes, a mix of in-school and distance learning, while catering and facilities will need to be modified to ensure social distancing measures are adhered to. Also, from a hygiene point of view, our cleaning services will have to respond to the plan that is put in place. In addition, we need to consider which staff will be able to return safely to work.

As it stands, I have as much information as you do, therefore I don't have the answers to these questions. Further written guidance is being released today which will give clarity to the points that were shared regarding the conditional plan. Many of our parents, children and staff will feel nervous about returning to school. I understand this completely.

Leaders have been planning for the reopening of schools for several weeks now and will continue to do so to ensure that whenever we do open, robust safety measures are in place. We will continue to follow government guidance and scientific evidence to keep our school community safe. **We will only open when it is safe to do so.** In the short term, nothing has changed and we are still being asked to stay at home, stay alert and wash our hands regularly.

I'd like to take this opportunity once again to thank you all for your courage and support over the past eight weeks. The community of Hebburn has always been unique in its strength and unity, however in recent times this is even more evident. It is a privilege to be a part of such an amazing community. If we continue to work together as one school family, supporting each other where necessary, we will get through this period of uncertainty and grow together.

Yours sincerely

N Conway

Striving for excellence, inspired by Gospel values.