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Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope that you and your families are safe and well. I want to personally thank you all for your support for the decisions that we have taken over recent weeks during this very difficult and uncertain time.

Many of you will be aware that our Prime Minister and the government have set an aspiration to open up schools on a phased basis from Monday 1st June. The guidance from the government is that schools are to consider widening provision from that which is currently in place for key workers and vulnerable children. In Primary Schools the additional provision to be considered is for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6; with an aspiration that all children in Primary Schools return for at least one month prior to the summer break.

Whilst we have been asked by the government to ensure our school has a plan for re-opening on 1st June, I want to be honest and clear with you that this is not possible at St Aloysius. The earliest we will be open for parents of children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 will be 8th June.

As you might imagine, the planning for the pupils' return is a complex one. In the coming few weeks leaders will be working tirelessly to ensure our plans for reopening are robust and shared with you in advance. As a result of COVID19, all of our lives have experienced significant disruption. This disruption has undoubtedly presented significant difficulties and anxieties for us all.

We eagerly anticipate the day when, not just the pupils identified by the Government, but all of our pupils and staff can return to school; to enjoy time with their friends and for St Aloysius to go back to being the safe, happy, learning environment that we all miss so much.

We are working with our Local Authority on risk assessments to ensure that the safety of children and staff coming back into the school is the highest priority. Whilst our governing body is responsible for health and safety in school we can not reopen unless the Health and Safety Team at South Tyneside Council allow us to do so. They are required to sign off our risk assessments and be satisfied that, whilst the risks presented by the virus cannot be fully eliminated, they can be mitigated as far as is humanly possible.

We are sharing with you our provisional draft plans, which identify **how** we propose to partially reopen and show the controls we are looking to put in place to keep you, your families, our pupils and staff as safe as is possible given the current circumstances, whilst maintaining a welcoming and supportive environment for children to continue to engage with and enjoy learning. Please note, they do not give a date for **when** we propose to reopen.

The Governing Body and myself will meet on 27th May to discuss our next steps. In this meeting, we will make a decision regarding potential reopening. I will write to you again next week to inform you of the decisions that have been reached and why. I will also provide you with further guidance on how we will operate.

Key workers and vulnerable pupils

Those pupils who have parents that are key workers and those pupils deemed as vulnerable remain eligible to attend school. This extends to the May half term holiday. We are not open on Bank Holiday Monday.

May half term holiday

May half term is a chance for staff and pupils to relax and switch off from the hard work that has been happening in your homes and here at school. Therefore, staff will not be setting any extra work. We will however be continuing our safeguarding calls and checks. Our home learning newsletter will be sent out on Monday 1st June by 3pm.

Please note that the school phone will not be answered next week during the holiday. If you need to contact school please do so via email. This email address will be monitored Tuesday-Friday and any queries will be picked up from here.

For families entitled to Free School Meals, we have been advised that vouchers are not available for the half term week. If you have requested a packed lunch for your child next week these can be collected from the Junior School after 11.30 am, Tuesday to Friday.

From 1st June

We will remain open for the children of key workers and vulnerable pupils for the first week back. They will be based in a new location. It will move to the Infant School, in the Y2 class area. Moving the childcare into this zone enables us to reorganise the rest of the school so that we are able to reopen to a wider group of children in the future.

I would like to thank the parents and pupils for all your support and hard work. Moreover, I would like to extend my thanks to the dedication of our community whose commitment has been superb. For you as parents and many of our staff, home schooling, working and juggling day to day life is not an easy task - I too am experiencing this for myself! I think you are all doing a brilliant job and you should be feeling very proud of your efforts.

Finally, I wish you all a very peaceful and safe half term and hope that you are able to enjoy the sunshine together with your families.

Nick Conway