



*Consett Infant School*  
*Member of*  
*Consett Infant and Beechdale Nursery Federation*

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Head Teacher: Mrs J Graham

Dear Families,

I hope that you all remain safe and well. I want to begin by thanking you for your kindness, care, cooperation and support since school closed to the majority of children on March 20th. I know that it has been a difficult time juggling family responsibilities, home learning and home working but our whole school family have appreciated the efforts that you have all made to 'stay at home, to keep safe and to protect the NHS'.

We have remained open for some children throughout this period, including during school holidays, at the request of key workers and for some vulnerable families.

I wrote to you last week after the prime minister's announcement on Sunday 10th May, about the potential re-opening of schools on June 1st. I have to be honest and let you know that over the last week we have been swamped with guidance from Durham LA, the Department for Education and from Unions. We have been working our way through a mountain of risk assessments and practicalities. However, with each day advice has changed or guidance has been updated. Schools across Durham are taking very different approaches, with some not able to offer for all year groups, others capping each year group at a particular number, half day timetables and so on. Decisions are being made on staffing numbers, building capacity and risk assessments. I appreciate the wait for clarity must be extremely stressful for you.

We are in the process of completing the risk assessment and procedures for staff, pupils and parents whilst considering Government, Local Authority and Union advice. As I am sure you can appreciate there is a huge amount of information to wade through, which in turn leads to practical changes on the ground.

The sole responsibility of choosing to reopen the school lies with the Head Teacher and Governing body. We must be assured that when we reopen, we can in a way that protects not only the children and staff but their wider families. During a meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> May Governors considered the following issues

- Recognition that we are located in the region with the largest current rate of infection.
- The discrepancies between advice/guidance from various sources.
- The views of parents and staff in our recent questionnaire.
- The mental and physical well-being of the children in our school.
- The health of staff, children and their families.
- The need to allow cleaning staff, who have worked in school consistently since the COVID-19 outbreak to have a sometime off

Taking into these considerations **we do not at present** feel able to widen the school offer from the 1<sup>st</sup> June. We need to make more preparations to ensure the environment and class rooms are adjusted to accommodate social distancing, ensure

we have the right amount of stock for cleaning and hygiene until the end of term and make sure that we have PPE equipment for using in cases of administering first aid.

Governors will be meeting again on the 9<sup>th</sup> June to review the situation and decide whether to extend our school offer to a wider number of children. I will write to you with an update after this meeting.

We are very much putting safe and measured plans in place to be able to provide a wider opening, when ready. But, will not be reopening on Monday the 1<sup>st</sup> June.

Please keep safe.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Graham  
Head Teacher