



Newsletter

5th June 2020

Dear parents/carers,

During uncertain and unprecedented times, leading a school can feel a little like navigating a boat through stormy seas! To avoid uncertainty and confusion we have endeavoured to carefully consider events and recommendations and make all of our decisions based on our school's guiding principles.

Virginia Primary School's guiding principles are:

- **To ensure the safety (both physical and emotional) of all our children and staff**
- **To promote the emotional, social, spiritual and physical wellbeing of all our children, staff and our community**
- **To enable and empower every child to access learning and be the best they can be**

These principles have guided us throughout every decision taken during the lockdown.

This is why we acted quickly to set up the learning blogs and followed it up with the distribution of Chrome books to enable all children to access learning. We set up regular phone calls with the families and children to provide both emotional support and feedback on the learning. We set up regular book swaps to further support our young learners.

We felt that good and open communication with our families and children would provide emotional and social support and empower every child to access the learning.

We followed our school guiding principles when we opened the school to our key worker and our most vulnerable children to enable them to thrive emotionally, physically and to access learning, as well as supporting the families and enabling key workers to carry out their invaluable jobs.

Following the Government's recommendation to open schools to Reception, year 1 and year 6, we took into consideration the needs of our children and our community alongside ensuring that sufficient safety measures could be put in place prior to re-opening. We decided that, because of the size of the school, in order to minimise risk of infection for our children and staff, we would consider a phased approach to re-opening for the designated year groups.

We made the decision to begin to re-open our school from Monday the 8th of June to our year 6 children. We believe that our year 6 children need to be prioritised because it is extremely important to focus on the children's learning and emotional wellbeing, especially as this is their last term at primary school before moving on. It is especially important to us that they have a good last term with their friends and teachers and feel emotionally ready for the upcoming change. We need to ensure that our year 6 children can feel ready to leave Virginia at the end of the term. Ready for their next adventure.

Since our decision, we have worked extremely hard with staff, Governors and the Local Authority to carry out an extensive risk assessment and set up a range of measures which will enable staff, families and children to feel confident that we are doing all we can to minimise the risk of infection, having taken into account latest research and recommendations.



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The year 6 children will be split into two groups or bubbles of 6 and 7 children, Salma and Aoife will be the adults in charge of each bubble. The bubbles will need to remain separate from each other to minimise risks for children and adults.

I am attaching the letter and a social story sent to the year 6 families so that you can get an idea of what school will look like for the children that have chosen to come in.

Once this is successfully running, we will consider what steps to take to move into our next phase of re-opening, and whether we can do so by continuing to keep risks to a minimum.

Stay safe, healthy and kind

Best wishes,

Barbara Lo Giudice, acting head teacher