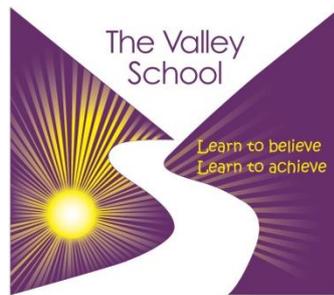


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Wednesday, 03 June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

## REF: WIDER RE-OPENING OF SCHOOLS

I am deeply disappointed that we have hit another barrier to re-opening as planned. I was very excited at the prospect of opening in a way that fully met the learning, emotional and social needs of our pupils and also managed to reduce the risks associated with the ongoing virus. Our commitment to the entire family of The Valley School has always been to ensure that we do everything possible to reduce risk and to meet the physical and emotional needs of everyone. We have had a very high pupil take-up rate for our model of re-opening, which is a very strong recognition of the trust that you have in us in this risk assessment process.

Work has continued tirelessly during half term to follow every bit of Government advice around the wider re-opening of schools and to make sense of it in relation to our very complex and aging site, including some buildings that are no longer in use. You will not be surprised to hear that the layout and fabric of our site makes any checks more complicated and lengthy. These checks also needed us to shut down certain areas in the school and we do not currently have access to running water and flushing toilets while contractors are working on site. During yesterday, all links to unused buildings have been capped and risks associated with this have now been eliminated. New push taps have been fitted throughout the school and significant improvements have been made to the hot water thermostats to ensure that hot water is always available for safe hand-washing.

However, the process to do this has meant that there is a renewed need to check and flush the entire hot and cold water system and to identify any taps that now need to be disconnected. The added complication is that specialist scientific companies are under extreme pressure and all processes are taking longer than normal. We understand that water testing results from today will not be available until sometime during the week beginning 15<sup>th</sup> June and, while we have no reason to assume that they will raise concerns, we must plan to enable further works in the light of the results when we receive them.



Except for key-worker children, whose learning will continue on Barnwell School's site, we cannot plan to open more widely until at least 22<sup>nd</sup> June. If your son or daughter needs to be added to the group who are learning at Barnwell, because of your work commitments or because of their specific vulnerability, please contact us via the admin email address or by telephone. In the meantime, teachers are increasing their focus on home learning in a variety of formats.

Barnwell School have been most generous in accommodating us and I know you will appreciate all that they are doing for our pupils.

We plan to open for year 11 for the week beginning 22<sup>nd</sup> June and for Groups A, B & C as in the original plan for the remainder of this term. I remain very grateful to you for your patience and compassion in this unimaginable set of circumstances.

Thank you again for playing your part in The Valley School family.

Yours sincerely,

Corina Foster

Corina Foster  
Headteacher