



# DELVES LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Delves Lane, Consett, Co Durham, DH8 7ES

Head Teacher: Mrs R A Woods

Tel: 01207 503984 Fax: 01207 588880 [delveslaneprimary@durhamlearning.net](mailto:delveslaneprimary@durhamlearning.net)

## LEARN, ACHIEVE, INSPIRE

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

We hope all our Delves Lane families are well and staying safe. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and kind comments since school closed to the majority of pupils on 20<sup>th</sup> March. We know that home learning for your children will have had many challenges, and there will have been lots of juggling between managing this as well as family responsibilities. We really do sympathise. Please remember we are at the end of the phone to offer help and support. You can also send us an email if you would like some advice.

We want to inform of our unanimous decision that our Governing Body have arrived at in terms of a response to the Government's 'ambition' to open schools on 1<sup>st</sup> June to four year groups (Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6).

Tonight, we have had a meeting with our governing body, in which we discussed risk assessments, guidance from both the local authority and the DfE (Department of Education). **We have decided that we, as a governing body, will not be opening to any children other than those of key workers, EHCP's (Education Health, Care Plans), and the vulnerable, as we have done for the last 9 weeks.**

We have informed the Local Authority of this decision, and the reasons why, and we hope that once you have read this letter, you will be able to support our decision.

Durham County Council has stated that the final decision about wider school opening will rest with schools. They have said that schools 'should only start a phased reopening when they feel it is safe to do so'.

We as a school have to take every possible step to ensure the safety of our children, their parents, our staff and their families. The staff at Delves Lane Primary School have children at the heart of all that they do, as do we, as Governors.

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 do so in a way that protects not only the children and staff but their wider families. During our meeting tonight, 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 surveys.
- The mental and physical well-being of the children and staff in our school.
- The health of staff, children and their families.
- The need to make changes to our site in line with recent guidance.

We need to make more preparations to ensure the environment and classrooms are re-arranged to accommodate social distancing, ensure we have the right amount of stock for cleaning and hygiene supplies for the rest of the term. We also need to secure PPE (Personal, Protective, Equipment) for use in cases of administering first aid and intimate care.

Governors will be meeting again on the 10<sup>th</sup> June to review the situation and any further scientific evidence and guidance. 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 it is safe to do so. However, we will not be reopening on Monday the 1<sup>st</sup> June.



As I am sure you can appreciate, in our lifetime, we have never faced a pandemic. We know in our communities that many families will have been affected by COVID-19 and we are thinking of you all.

Our team at Delves Lane Primary School would like to thank you all for all your continued support; we are very fortunate!

Stay safe everyone and enjoy a well-earned break next week. We will keep our fingers crossed for some fine weather!

Look after yourselves and your families.

Mrs Woods

**Headteacher**