

13 May 2020



**North Cornwall  
Learning Trust**

Working Together for Local Children

Sir James Smith's School, Dark Lane, Camelford PL32 9UJ

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Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Starting the process of opening schools**

Thank you for all your support over the past couple of months. As you are aware the Prime Minister believes the time is right, from the week commencing 1 June 2020, to welcome back more children to Early Years, School and Further Education settings **provided** that the five key tests set by Government justify the changes at the time. The Prime Minister's words were heavily caveated and conditional – things may change. Teacher and Support Staff unions are advising their members that Government plans for re-opening are unfeasible and dangerous. The situation is rather fluid at the moment.

The Government are asking schools, colleges and childcare providers to plan for 1 June partial re-opening, ahead of confirmation that the 5 tests are met.

**Camelford, Otterham, St Breward and St Teath Primary Schools**

From the week commencing 1 June 2020 at the earliest, the Government will be asking primary schools to welcome back children in Nursery, Reception, year 1 and year 6 only. This will be in addition to priority groups already able to attend. On-line learning for other pupils will continue. Currently, priority provision for primary pupils is delivered at Camelford Primary, this will transfer back to your child's school on 1 June.

**Camelford Area Resource Base**

The ARB has remained open to cater for a few pupils during the school closure period. However, staffing levels and the need for personal protection means it is likely we will not be able to welcome back all pupils on 1 June. Parents of pupils attending the ARB will be contacted separately.

**Sir James Smith's Secondary School**

The Government has asked secondary schools to offer some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of year 10 students who are due to take key exams next year. This will be alongside the full time provision they are offering to priority groups and continued on-line learning for pupils in years 7 – 9. Currently, priority provision for secondary pupils is delivered at Camelford Primary, this will transfer to Sir Jim's on 1 June. We will contact parents/carers of year 10 pupils with details once the government has issued more guidance.

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**Registered in England & Wales Company No. 11482891**

**Registered office** Woodwater House, Pynes Hill, Exeter EX2 5WR

### **Why are schools opening gradually?**

We want to get all children and young people back into education as soon as the scientific advice allows because it is the best place for them to learn, and because we know how important it is for their mental wellbeing to have social interactions with their peers and teachers. We will gradually increase the numbers of children and young people attending NCLT schools. A phased return will increase the chances of successful reintroduction.

### **How we will keep pupils and staff safe?**

The safety of pupils and staff is our priority. By returning pupils gradually we can initially implement social distancing by reducing the number of children and young people in classrooms compared to usual. However, in primary settings it will **not** be possible to stick to the 2m social distancing rule. Staff will also be able to put protective measures in place to reduce risks.

### **Protective measures will include:**

- We will conduct risk assessments and continuously review practise
- Avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- Children will need to stay within their new class/group wherever possible minimising contact and mixing
- Ensuring good respiratory hygiene - promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- Increased deep cleaning at the end of each day and during the day
- Strict hand washing routines
- Expectation that pupils use disposable wipes to clean equipment after use
- Reducing 'pinch points' (such as parents/carers dropping children off at the start and end of day)
- Staggering break time and lunch time
- Utilising outdoor space to increase the amount of time spent outside the confines of classrooms
- Staff and pupils will be encouraged to keep safety as the top priority
- Heads will inform parents/carers immediately if there are any concerns and will not hesitate to close the school if required

### **Government guidance on face masks**

Government guidance based on scientific advice is clear that wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended.

### **Government advice on social distancing in school**

Government guidance states that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to early years and schools, guidance takes this into account. Schools are expected to work through the hierarchy of protective measures set out above.

### **Shielded and clinically vulnerable pupils**

Children and young people who have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions have been advised to shield. We do not expect these children to be attending school, and they should continue to be supported at home as much as possible.

### **Testing**

The Government has promised that staff and pupils in all settings will be eligible for testing if they become ill with coronavirus symptoms, as will members of their households. A negative test will enable children to get back to childcare or education, and their parents/carers to get back to work. A positive test will ensure rapid action to protect their classmates and staff in their setting. Those who are clinically vulnerable, or are living with someone who is, should follow our protective measures guidance.

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**Will the school be able to run the normal curriculum?**

The short answer is no because classes will be smaller and may have to be repeated up to 3 times. Staff and pupils will be expected to work differently. Prior to any reopening, school staff will be engaged in working out key learning for the remaining 7-8 weeks of the school year. The key aspect of our planning will be to ensure no pupils are disadvantaged by differences in provision between those in school and those remaining at home. Head teachers will write to parents/carers once details of curriculum provision have been decided.

**When will all pupils be able to return?****Primary pupils**

The Government hopes that all pupils of primary age will be able to return to school gradually over the remainder of the half term but this is dependent on scientific advice. We will write to you prior to each year group restarting school.

**Secondary pupils**

The Government does not think pupils of secondary age other than year 10 and those in priority groups will return until September. It will be vital that these pupils continue to engage with on-line learning.

**Finally**

Thank you for taking time to read this letter. These are frustrating and worrying times as we await further guidance from the DfE. Government guidance has been slow to arrive on some occasions. Some of the advice for schools (e.g. PPE, social distancing) appears contradictory to advice for other settings. There is much to be considered before we can open. Staff appreciate there is considerable anxiety amongst families and that some parents/carers may be reluctant for their children to return to school. We want our provision to be safe for your children and for our staff and their families too.

You have been so supportive of us and we are grateful. Please continue to be patient and we will let you know as soon as we can how we will implement the Government plans.

Stay safe.

Yours faithfully



**Jon Lawrence**

**CEO**

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