

15th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers, *We Learn, We Lead, We Inspire*

I hope that you are well and making the most of these last 10 days of Ramadhan, where we can reflect upon how previous generations have dealt with great challenges and adversities.

On Sunday 10th May the Prime Minister addressed the nation and explained the changes to the current Lockdown arrangements. The Government also announced the timescales as to when pupils will start to return to schools. Please see the link below for the very comprehensive guide from the Government:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools>

A summary from the guidance is:

- Primary schools are being asked to welcome back all children currently in Reception, Year 1 or Year 6.
- This will be a phased return over a period of time
- That primary and secondary schools will be reopening at different times
- Social distancing will be in operation
- Class groups will need to be split between two or more rooms – max 15 pupils in a class
- Staff availability may be an issue due to the lack of available childcare or open schools for their own children as well as shielding.

Primary and Secondary headteachers in Slough are working with the Council to try to bring your children back to school, for at least a short while before the summer holidays. They agree that this may help to prepare your children for returning to school full time, which we hope will not be too far away.

However, **this can only happen when schools can be confident that your children will be safe, your family will be safe and our staff will be safe.** Slough schools understand that many of you will share our desire for children to be back in school with their friends and their teachers and for this to be as safe as possible.

This means that there is a great deal of preparation work to ensure that the school building is safe and that staff are ready. Iqra school is already working hard to support your children's learning at home. This will continue until everybody is back in school.



The Government have said that **1st June** is a **possible** date, but this is **not a definite date**. Please do not send your children to school unless we have contacted you directly regarding school start dates. Any new provision from June is likely to be part time for some year groups. This may mean your child is offered a place just for a morning or an afternoon as well as having staggered times to limit the contact at the start and end of the school day.

Please understand that what works in one school will not work in another. This means that some schools will be able to welcome more children, or more year groups than others. Please remember that Iqra school will always act in the best interests of your child and your family.

We will provide further updates when the school is ready to welcome back the children. I would ask you to be patient as we work on the detail of the school's reopening and promise that we will inform you of arrangements as soon as we are able to.

I would like to thank the many parents that have completed the online survey about re-opening of Iqra school. Your views are valuable and enable the school to put in place strategies to support the school community to return to school safely. If you have not completed the online survey please can you click on the link below.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/collect/email/compose?sm=DW1otj4FkxXHqIbcSawvq5op1bkWRv9qkOOK1ezga_2B0wztS0e_2FqzAhwksrOpE0Wq_2B_2FmLMQgCe1lLjuQP4aCJSg_3D_3D&send_survey=true

80% of parents from the online survey so far have said that they will not send their children to school as they do not feel that the school environment is safe. A number of parents have replied that they are worried about the school implementing and maintaining **social distancing** as they are shielding vulnerable family members at home. I empathise with your concerns.

The school will carry out rigorous risk assessments before it reopens. As part of the daily risk assessments we will endeavour to:

- Ensure the cleaning and hygiene of the school building daily
- Limit movement around the school
- Have regular on-site examinations including signage in all classrooms and corridors
- Reduce class sizes so that there is **no more** than 15 in a class
- Minimise contact and mixing between children and groups of children
- Limiting the number of shared resources that are taken home by staff and pupils and limit the exchange of such resources.

- Changes to drop off and pick up routines. Parents will be required to drop off and pick up their children at the school gate and will **not** be allowed onto the school premises (playground).

PRIMARY SCHOOL

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However, in spite of the additional health and safety strategies we endeavour to have in place, the government have advised that:

'Children and young people who live in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and the child or young person is able to understand and follow those instructions' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>).

Although we venture to endorse stringent social distancing rules with all pupils, we cannot ensure that this will be maintained at all times, especially amongst young children. Therefore, the focus of the curriculum will be to prioritise resocialisation strategies into new style school routines.

Please remember that these are unprecedented times and that the school staff are working hard to prioritise the safe return to school for all pupils.

Yours sincerely,

Dr M Maher
Headteacher