

Eagle House School (Mitcham and Sutton)
Dear Parents and Carers

A big thank you

Firstly I would like to say a big thank you to all of you for your amazing support during the current COVID crisis. We are very grateful for the lovely emails and messages of encouragement you have sent us, whether your child has been in school or has remained at home. Our priority throughout has been your child's health, safety and wellbeing.

These have been really confusing and anxiety provoking times for our children and I hope, for those of you whose child has remained at home, that you have found our work packs, phone calls and ASD resources to be supportive and creative.

What do the new Government announcements mean for my child?

As you know the Government has announced that with effect from Monday 1st June schools will start to reopen with a staged approach. The position for special schools like ours, although not entirely clear yet, is that we will carry on as we have been doing through the epidemic regardless of age group. That means we will remain open across all age ranges as we have been doing throughout in order to support families of key workers and our most vulnerable children.

The new guidance for families in special schools from 1st June is "send your child to school if it is appropriate". What does "if appropriate mean" of course? The Government are keen to encourage children in special schools to come to school where it is safe to do so and where social distancing permits. Of course social distancing creates many issues for children in a small special school and inevitably we would envisage that we will continue to run a staggered rota from 1st June in order to keep everyone safe and well.

Shall I send my child back to school?

For many of you this will be a difficult decision to make and you may feel that you are not ready to return your child. The Government has said that there will be no penalties against you as the parent/carer or for us as the school if the decision is reached to not send a child back to school at this stage. The decision should, quite rightly be based on risk and I would therefore ask you to notify your Head teacher by return email if you would like your child to return on a staged basis or if you would prefer them to remain at home from 1st June. This will allow us to assess numbers and how we can establish safe working practices. If you are not sure and need some guidance please call us and we will try to support you.

May half term holiday

It is inevitable therefore that we cannot operate a full staff team and full pupil cohort from the 1st June. Our aim will be to support each of you in the best way we can, in line with DfE guidance. Please be aware that the guidance changes almost daily and the suggested date of 1st June is only based on meeting the 5 tests that government have set. We will continue to update if anything changes.

However, as we have been asked to prepare for the 1st June and anticipate more of your children to return to school, we will need to have our usual half term break as part of this preparation. The children who have been attending each day are inevitably in need of their usual half term break and the staff are equally very tired as we have been open since February half term without the usual Easter break. We also need time to clean the school, create our safer distancing procedures and

complete some essential maintenance work that we have been unable to do. **Please note therefore that your child's school will be closed as for half term on Monday 25th May until Monday 1st June.**

As ever please call us any anytime if you need any help and support and I hope you all stay safe and well.

Kind regards

Julia Pithouse

Chief Executive Officer

Eagle House Group