

15 May 2020

Dear Parent/ Carer,

Considerations for expanding onsite numbers in schools

I hope that this letter finds both you and your loved ones safe and well. We are living through extraordinary times! I write to update you on the general principles of our planning for increasing the number of people (children and staff) on our school sites. Your Headteacher will be keeping you informed of specific details as they happen.

You will be aware of the Government's recently announced ambition for a possible phased re-opening of schools from 1st June. The Trust, together with your Headteacher, have been working on plans for expanding onsite numbers for some time. You will understand many of the challenges involved. From the work we have done thus far, we believe it unlikely that any expansion of numbers on our sites, when it comes, will match the ambition announced by government.

Our planning has considered:

1. Health & Safety
2. The Physical Environment
3. Staffing
4. Services
 - a. Scheduling (Workforce availability, Onsite provision, Offsite provision, Student attendance)
5. The Community

Our first principle is that any expansion of onsite numbers must be safe enough to command the confidence of you, our parents, our teachers and our School Leaders. Your Headteacher is the person who makes the decision every day about the safety of the site to be open. This decision is an even more difficult one in the current circumstances. It is taken with care, always. It is taken in the best interests of everyone involved, always.

Any increase in onsite numbers in school must be measured and very carefully managed. We will not put anybody at risk. We will talk to you in order to understand your personal circumstances and your feelings about a return to school and when. We understand that there will be a wide range of feelings and, likely, some anxieties. This work will take place over the coming days and weeks. It is about planning carefully and does not imply a fixed 'return to school' date.

We understand that further discussion is taking place around the scientific evidence used to inform the government's decision-making. I welcome this as a necessary action to help secure the confidence of parents, staff and children for a gradual, safe and managed increase in numbers on school sites as we take the careful steps towards our new normal. Coronavirus remains active amongst us. I urge you to follow the safety guidance and to play your part in reducing the spread of the disease.

With every best wish,



Mark Wilson
Chief Executive Officer
Wellspring Academy Trust