



JULIAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Executive Headteacher

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Head of School West Norwood

Becky Coburn

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Head of School Streatham

Sam Linton

Monday 1st June 2020

Dear Families,

I am writing following the government's confirmation that it's asking schools to open for selected year groups during June and July. I thought it was important that you heard from governors given the significance of the decisions being made about the school and your children's education.

First, it may be helpful to describe the role of governors in these decisions. Governors are ultimately accountable for what happens at Julian's. That means governors set the school's overall direction and Alison and the team work out the details of how to get there. In doing our job, governors have to take account of guidance and direction from the government and the local council – but ultimately it is for us and the leadership team to work out what is best for our school.

Governors have asked Alison to put together plans that do their best to open the school for selected year groups while still educating all our other pupils and keeping everyone in the school safe. You'll appreciate that this is a very difficult balancing job and Alison and the team have worked hard to come up with arrangements that will work at Julian's. The details of the plans are set out in Alison's letter of 30th May.

Governors have reviewed the plans and approved them. The plans take into account the government's guidance as well as the practical realities of running the school and we believe they strike the best balance for Julian's. This is wholly new territory for schools, and we believe it is right to take a cautious approach. Ours is a large school, and this brings complexity to the logistics of dealing with large numbers of small classes. By opening the school up gradually, the team can learn about how the new arrangements work in practice and change them if they need to.

The biggest difference between our plans and the government's national guidance is our decision not to bring back nursery and Reception children yet. We have worked with Alison and the team to try and figure out how that could work at Julian's but have concluded that there isn't a practical way to do it while still meeting the government guidance on group

sizes, keeping children and staff safe, and meeting the needs of all the pupils who aren't coming back to school yet.

This will be hugely disappointing for many parents who would like to see their children come back to school. We share this disappointment, but we believe that this is the right decision for Julian's right now, with the current guidance, the number of pupils likely to come into school and the resources we have available.

Alison and the team will be reviewing and updating the plans as we work through the rest of this school year. They will be monitoring the risks facing pupils and staff, and will respond to the government's guidance as it evolves – which it does frequently. Alison and the team will keep you up-to-date on developments as things change, including any changes to the year groups coming in to school, so please do keep an eye on the school website for the latest information.

And while starting to bring pupils back into school, Alison and the team will also continue to support all the children being educated at home and work with governors to put together plans to open the school much more fully in September. She will be in touch to explain those plans once they are ready.

With all that in mind, I want to thank Alison, the senior leadership team and the whole Julian's staff for their hard work since this crisis began. They have been working tirelessly to make the best of the current situation, and governors and I are appreciative of their dedication and commitment.

Finally, I want to celebrate all the support you are giving your children and the school. Like you, I have children at home and know the frustrations – and joys! – that come with home schooling. Every family's circumstances are unique, and I know that this period will have been exceptionally difficult for many of you. One of the great things about Julian's is the strength of our whole school community, and I am proud of the way we are pulling together to do the best for all our children. Thank you.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Davies". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end of the name.

Chris Davies
Chair of Governors, Julian's Primary School