

KINGSMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kingsmoor Primary School Bawdrip Bridgwater Somerset TA7 8PY

Tel: 01278 683371

Email: Sch.210@educ.somerset.gov.uk

www.kingsmoorprimaryschool.co.uk

Headteacher: Mrs J Warren



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Dear Parents/Carers

We are now beginning our third week of schooling for the Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children who have returned to school alongside our Key worker and vulnerable pupils (some of whom have continued to attend since March 20th).

The arrangements that have been put into place as per my previous letters are being implemented well and we are extremely pleased with how the children have adapted to the slight classroom changes - smaller groups with different staff for some, social distancing and individual work stations. A gentle reminder please for children and parents to remain socially distanced at drop off and pick up times.

The Children are brilliant! and it does not surprise me at all how the majority show great resilience and determination - whether they are currently in school or equally working at home continuing to do their best for you as parents.

I now write to update you on the current situation at Kingsmoor and how this links to the recent government announcements and guidance sent to schools, the speculation in the media, and Somerset county councils advice to Headteachers and schools.

I have delayed sending this letter out to you as I was waiting to hear more concrete guidance from the government but I feel it is only fair to update you all now with the information that has been received up to this point. I'm not sure how long I will have to wait!

As per the government announcement last week - the government's original intention of all children coming back to school before the end of this Summer term is not going to happen. In all honesty, for Kingsmoor this was always going to be unrealistic as we currently have only a small majority of our staff who are physically able to work under the government guidelines (a high proportion are falling under clinically or extremely clinically vulnerable and advised to work from home if at all possible). At present I have 2 out of 8 teachers currently available to work alongside children and 5 out of 10 teaching assistants. As you are fully aware, our whole staff are amazing and have been working really hard whether that may be from home or in school and I for one am extremely grateful to have such a fantastic team alongside me.

The current staff that are in school are able to accommodate 2 x Year 6 groups, 1 x Year 1 group, 1 x Reception group (with no more than 15 children in each group) using the same adults to supervise during their time in school. If parents of further Reception and Year 1 children are interested in returning to school before the end of summer please can I ask that you contact the office as soon as possible with your thoughts. These groups will not go over 15 and as mentioned above I have no further staff available to add additional groups at present. Unfortunately, due to staffing levels there is a possibility that your child will be unable to return if group numbers reach 15.

The Key worker and Vulnerable pupils have now been split into two groups to ensure numbers are also below 15 within each group.

I am waiting for confirmation that schools will be able to close as per our set calendar on Friday 17th July - with our Inset still in place on the 20th. Some of you may have read coverage in the papers which states that the government are closing for key workers/vulnerable pupils over the holidays - I have had nothing to confirm this as yet and will aim to confirm with those parents who fall into this group when I have received Government guidance.

There has also been speculation with regards to summer schools and catch up programmes - as above it is important to note that Headteachers have had no guidance on this up to this point.

Ultimately, even though these have certainly been very different times over the last few months, I am very aware that a high proportion of our parents have done an excellent job at supporting their children to meet their needs whether that be educational through accessing the school's blog to structure your child's day, by creating your own ingenious ideas possibly linked to areas of learning - or equally because it's an area of interest between you and your child. Over these weeks staff have been overwhelmed by how parents have responded - where you clearly will have developed your child's skill set and 5Rs (Risk taking, Reassurance, Relationships, Resourcefulness and Resilience) through day to day life skills: baking, gardening, painting, art projects, building, supporting adults in their jobs - so many things will have had an impact and you may not even realise by how much. For many families the emphasis quite rightly will have been on putting your child's mental health and well-being first. So therefore we completely understand that 'work' may have been put to one side. As a parent you are so conscious of their wellbeing and state of mind, and equally your own emotional state, you will have worked incredibly hard to enable your child to feel as happy, settled and supported to the best of your ability.

So when it comes to 'catching up' please do not worry about this. Teachers and teaching assistants across the country are experts at this - it's what we do- in every class, every year we meet your child's needs and move them on from exactly where they are. Consequently, I believe all children, parents and all Kingsmoor staff do need the holidays to take that break and fully recharge without any additional pressure to continue to 'work.'

I hope the government will provide the next set of guidance which will help me prepare for September but until I receive this I do not want to build up hopes or false promises that I won't be able to follow through and therefore cannot give you any definite outlines for September yet. Rest assured, as soon as I have received any information I will construct a plan which meets the needs of our Kingsmoor students as safely as we possibly can but also taking into account staff well-being and practicalities with regards to space in the building. A great deal to consider to get it right.

In the meantime - we are also thinking about class transitions and moving up to the next year group! Lots of preparation is underway for our new starters in Class 1 and we are equally considering each of our existing year groups and moving them up to the next teacher. Further information will be sent with regards to this and how we can support every child in 'moving up.' Our inset days will focus on transition arrangements as well as report writing which is underway. **Please can I remind all parents of YR, 1 and 6 as well as key workers and vulnerable children that the school will be closed on these two days – Friday, 26th June and Monday 29th June.**

Many thanks for taking the time to read this update - I appreciate it isn't very definitive but hopefully enables you to see the picture I am currently seeing! Somerset County Council are in favour of all children and staff having their 'normal' holiday period and are equally being supportive in gaining an understanding of each schools' individual circumstances and capacity to have children back in school safely.

We urge you to continue to do your very best and remain healthy by following the Government's recommended procedures. I will be in touch when further guidance has been received. For now you should be very proud of yourselves and how you have supported your children and the school over the last few months.

I know for one I am extremely grateful to have such a supportive, kind and caring community of parents. Thank you.

Best wishes



Mrs Warren