



Spires Federation

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Emma Negus - Hill

Our Core Values are Respect, Honesty, Hope, Wisdom and Collaboration

Email: Admin@SpiresFederation.co.uk Website: SpiresFederation.co.uk
Twitter: @DigbyPrimary @DunstonPrimary @NoctonPrimary

Friday 29th May 2020

Dear parents/carers,

COVID RECOVERY UPDATE Re: The Proposed Phased Opening of Spires Federation schools

Children are the centre of all we do at the Spires Federation and we are desperate to have our children back in school. However, health, safety and safeguarding are always our number one priority and I have said from the very beginning that I am not prepared to do anything that I think might risk the welfare of our children, their families and of our staff.

We have found it very difficult to understand how the guidance for schools varies so greatly to that given to the public. Outside of schools, we are all expected to socially distance; from Monday to only meet with 6 other people outside of our household, in a garden and not to enter anyone else's household; outside retail units are allowed to operate from Monday; non-essential inside retail units from Monday 15th June. Yet, following the announcement from the Government yesterday, it expects that we will open our doors to a significant number of children.

Children cannot effectively socially distance. We can mitigate every risk possible, but it is my opinion that this risk is too great to warrant the extended opening of our schools for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6.

The SAGE report made it clear that they believe by delaying the opening of schools by 2 weeks, it will **halve the risk of children getting the disease**. Even if there are very few new infections within schools, this could also still be risky for some adults who come into contact with infected children. This might include teachers and other school staff, household members, childminders, and any other adults the child may have contact with.

Which is why, I, along with the support of the Governing Body, have decided to DELAY the opening of all 3 schools in the federation until the 15th June at the earliest. This will be reviewed periodically and you will be kept informed as to an ongoing decision. Once again, I still cannot promise that we will open then, this date is conditional. The first review date will be Wednesday 10th June and you will be informed of our decision as soon as possible after this.

Further to this, please be cautious about comparing our approach to the return to school with that of other schools locally. Each school is unique with regard to the size of its rooms, the layout of the buildings, the availability of its staff and the challenges they face. I am sure some schools will feel confident in carrying out the Government guidance to its fullest whilst others will have to take a different approach that better suits their context.

Digby Church of England School,
Church Street, Digby, Lincoln. LN4 3LZ
Ph: 01526 320630
Registered charity: 1045696

Dunston St Peter's Church of England School,
Back Lane, Dunston, Lincoln. LN4 2EH
Ph: 01526 320027
Registered charity: 1045951

Nocton Community School,
School Lane, Nocton, Lincoln. LN4 2BJ
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Our provision for key workers remains unchanged. **However, we WILL be offering this in all 3 schools now, so we are prepared to increase capacity on each site as and when it is safe to do so. Each school will open only for the children of keyworkers/vulnerable children on Monday 1st June.** As soon as other children begin to return, our Key Worker children will become their own group ("bubble") and stay with the same staff members to avoid mixing. The Government defined list of key workers remains the same so we do not anticipate this group growing in number during the coming weeks.

The parents of all Keyworker/vulnerable pupils from each school will be contacted at some point today by a member of the Senior Leadership team to double check if you would like to still send your children to school. Please remember this is parental choice and children do not have to attend school. We are still unable at this point to offer wrap around care, this will be reviewed periodically. Parents and carers should follow the same COVID Recovery expectations as issued before the half term holiday. These are outlined in our Behaviour Policy Addendum, which can be found on our website by following this link:

[http://www.spirefederation.co.uk/media/BEHAVIOUR%20POLICY%20ADDENDUM%201%20FOR%20COVID%20RECOVERY%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.spirefederation.co.uk/media/BEHAVIOUR%20POLICY%20ADDENDUM%201%20FOR%20COVID%20RECOVERY%20(2).pdf)

Further to this, can I request that children come in clean clothes **EVERY DAY**. That all parents apply sun cream themselves to children before they enter the school site as the staff are NOT permitted to apply this when pupils are in school.

Your individual schools will be sending out letters with photographs of each site on over the weekend, for you to share with your child and the adults that they will be with. This should enable them to become more familiar with a very different looking school than the one they left. I am sure that you can appreciate that staff have to reorganise groups and ensure that adult support is carefully planned, so we will endeavour to share this with you as soon as those arrangements have been made.

As previously mentioned, I will also support staff in each school to extend, where possible, the home learning opportunities for your children. Amongst other things, we are looking at the possibility for some year groups of delivering live online lessons where children can see and talk to both their teacher and their classmates.

I would like to thank you and all of our school communities for their support throughout this challenging time and I hope you can understand that our ambition is to bring our children back to school in a safe and well-planned manner. As always, we will keep all of our decisions under regular review and make sure you are informed every step of the way.

Kind regards,

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