



# *Loving, Learning, Living*

Headteacher: Mrs Suzanne Connolly

Felton C of E Primary School Mouldshaugh Lane Felton Morpeth Northumberland NE65 9PY  
01670 787315

Email: [admin@felton.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:admin@felton.northumberland.sch.uk)

Web: [www.felton.northumberland.sch.uk](http://www.felton.northumberland.sch.uk)

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Dear Parents and Carers

Government guidance has now been published which outlines the partial reopening of schools from 01 June 2020. I would like to inform you of the principles and processes that Felton C of E Primary School intend to follow, to ensure a safe school environment for all.

## **Principles for re-opening**

1. We are committed to reopening in a calm and well organised manner, which reassures pupils, parents and staff that their school is a safe place to learn, work and play and that all government guidance is followed carefully.
2. We are committed to supporting the welfare and wellbeing of our pupils and staff, recognising that this is an anxious period for all.
3. We will reopen in a carefully considered manner, basing our decisions on the best available evidence, and we will only reopen once we are convinced that our staffing levels, revised systems and plans are effective.
4. Monday 1 June is the earliest designated opening date. We have been given some flexibility with the date for reopening, and it is likely that we will reopen for the designated years groups during the week beginning 1 June, but not necessarily on 1 June for all groups.

## **Priority Groups in our schools**

1. Schools are asked to continue to prioritise places for the most vulnerable pupils and for the children of Key Workers, should they require a place, irrespective of year group.
2. We will then prioritise pupils in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 and Year 6.

### **The Department for Education (DfE) rationale**

The DfE [guidance](#) states that younger children are being prioritised in the first phases of wider opening. The guidance provides the government's latest understanding of the science, which indicates that we need to take a phased approach to limit the risk of increasing the rate of transmission:

- There is high scientific confidence that children of all ages have less severe symptoms than adults if they contract COVID-19
- There is moderately high scientific confidence that younger children are less likely to become unwell if infected with COVID-19
- Numbers of children going back need to be limited initially then increased gradually as the science permits; and
- Systems to reduce the size of the groups coming into contact with each other – such as smaller class sizes spread out across settings – need to be implemented

### **Protective measures**

The guidance on protective measures provides the basis for our site and organisational plans. Our rationale is to minimise the number of contacts within school and therefore class sizes will be reduced in size, to enable social distancing to be maintained.

**It is not recommended that either pupils or staff in schools use PPE.**

Instead, we will follow the guidance to ensure -

- Regular handwashing
- Regular cleaning of surfaces etc
- Staggered breaks and lunch
- Social distancing within fixed small groups of 15 pupils maximum

The DfE has published [guidance](#) for parents which I encourage you to read carefully. This guidance states that the government is asking schools and settings to open more widely from 1 st June. As described earlier in this letter, it sets out which groups are expected to return to school, expectations of attendance and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

We understand that parents may have concerns about sending their children back to school and the DfE has stated that parents will not be penalised for non-attendance at this time.

Pupils and staff who experience symptoms of Covid-19 **must not attend school, but should inform the school immediately.**

### **Staffing and the Curriculum**

We will, of course, make all learning, whether at home or school, meaningful and relevant, although it may not always follow the published curriculum during this period.

Should staffing levels fall below the requirement to keep pupils safe in small socially distanced groups, then the school may follow a part time timetable for some pupils for a period of time.

### **Remote Learning**

Schools will continue to deliver materials and content for remote learning for those year groups who are not returning to school at this point. The year groups who will continue to access remote learning only are Years, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

### **What Happens Next?**

We will be asking all eligible families (Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 and 'Keyworker' children and vulnerable children) to identify whether they intend to send their children to school. They will shortly receive an online form to indicate their intentions. This will allow us to model what provision could look like and will be key to our decision making, as the safety of pupils and staff is paramount.

We are working to fully implement the DfE guidance prior to reopening. We will contact you once we have an indication of the number of pupils who are likely to return to school for this next stage, and to provide more detailed information about school specific arrangements and requirements.

Further guidance from the DfE is anticipated and we will communicate with you regularly.

Our plan for now is to continue to provide home learning activities, maintaining contact with the children. Thank you once again for your support and patience during this very difficult time.

Kind regards

Suzanne Connolly