Dear Parents/Carers,

Re-opening of Birches Green Junior School

May I, firstly take this opportunity to thank all of the parents who responded to last week’s Parent Survey and for the overwhelming support, we received for our School. Staff have continued to work tirelessly throughout this challenging time to continue to support and care for our children in very difficult circumstances and it is lovely to know that our efforts are appreciated.

Secondly, I would like to thank you all for your patience and understanding. We will endeavor to inform you of only confirmed changes to your child’s education as and when these are received from Government and/or the Local Authority.

In line with the latest Governmental guidelines, we are proposing to re-open the school to welcome back the children of key workers, children with additional needs and initially to the children of one-year group only. As the Covid 19 pandemic eases, we may be in a position to open to more year groups, but will not do so unless it is completely safe for the children, staff and parents. At all times we continue to carry out risk assessments, making changes to the building and routines to maximise everyone’s safety. Our risk assessments are available and published on the School Website under the heading “Covid-19 response”. You will find other useful information there too.

We are requesting that we welcome back first, the Year 6 children. This is at the DfE request to prioritise pupils, as the DfE guidance ’Actions for education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020 (published 11 May 2020) states, “year groups within primary have been prioritised because they are transition years” and the move from Year 6 to Year 7 is such an important one, we wish to support our children in every way we can.

If you think you are now eligible for a place in any other year group as a Keyworker please complete the Keyworker’s Form on the school website and email it to enquiry@birchgnj.bham.sch.uk by 4pm on Friday 22nd May 2020.
Thank you to all parents who have already confirmed that they will be sending their children back to school once re-opening is confirmed. We will continue to monitor the situation closely once we have re-opened, evaluating building capacity and staffing before inviting more year groups to return.

Children who are entitled to Free School Meals have had the opportunity to receive packed lunches daily at the rear of the Infant school, this service will cease once the school is re-opened. However, families who are eligible will now receive a shopping voucher for a local store and we will announce more information regarding this once the details are finalised with the Local Authority.

When school re-opens there will be changes to the way you drop off and collect your child. These measures have been put in place to assist with social distancing and must be followed strictly. Please enter the site via the Birches Green Road entrance ONLY, keeping the two metre distance at all times. Staff will collect children from the Junior gate; they will be wearing personal protective equipment. Do not be alarmed, this is for your protection as well as for the children. Please do not attempt to speak with staff at the gate for any length of time. Parents will then be asked to leave via the Colston Road gate through the Staff Car Park, again keeping the two metre distance at all times, please remain vigilant whilst doing so, as this is the main vehicular access for the site. This routine should be repeated at Home Time. The Fir Tree Road entrance will not be open at ANY time. Thank you for your co-operation on this point.

Communication between parents and staff will continue via the telephone, e-mail, class dojo system (if you have not already signed up for this, please do so as it is an easy way for you to speak with your child’s class Teacher directly). Should you have any further queries please feel free to contact us, most staff are available during normal school hours and check our School Website which is updated frequently throughout the week and many frequently asked questions could be answered for you there.

For those children not yet returning to school, we will continue to support your child’s learning at home via the website and class packs will still be available for collection from Colston Road entrance between 12-12.30pm daily.

Thank you for your continued support and co-operation during these unprecedented times. We will contact you all again once we have a confirmed decision on when we are able to re-open. We are working towards Thursday 4th June but remember this is still TBC.

In the meantime, Stay Well, Stay Alert!

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. A. Stevenson

Interim Head teacher