

Dear Reception and Key Worker Parents,

Thank you once again for all your support and positive feedback during the last ten days. It has been very uplifting and encouraging. I cannot emphasise enough how fantastic the children have been in adapting to a different environment and timetable. They have been so well behaved and are clearly enjoying our provision. It has been lovely for the staff to hear and see them laughing, learning and playing together.

Thank you to the whole staff team who are making this all run so smoothly, planning carefully, adapting spaces when we have wet weather, and ensuring the enjoyment of learning is kept as a priority.

You will have seen the announcement by the Government that schools will no longer be required to bring back all primary aged children before the end of the academic year. We knew that this was an unrealistic expectation, unless the restrictions on class sizes of 15 were removed, as we are using our whole school grounds, building and all our available staff to make this work for our Reception and key worker children in a safe and effective way. We are, however, thinking and planning to ensure our year one and two children are supported as well as possible throughout this long period of being away from school. We are very aware of how challenging this is for the parents of these year groups and want to provide the best support for home learning and transition for September that we can.

National data is now available about the return to school on 1st June. Only 52% schools opened to larger numbers of children on 1st June. Currently 11% pupils nationally are attending school. At The Orchard a total of 102 children are attending school across the week including 80/90 Reception children and 22 children of key workers who are attending on different days across the week with a maximum of 15 on any day. We are providing over eighty lunches a day which is by far the highest number of lunches being provided in our district of 28 schools, another indicator that our attendance is higher than most with 37% of our population, (comparison 11% nationally), attending school.

Reading

We are hearing the children read during the school day and need the additional books we sent home to be returned now to increase our available resources. Due to the guidance and risk of infection, may I ask you to wipe clean all the school reading books you have and return them to a classroom box outside the classroom on **Friday**. We will leave them in the box over the weekend and then do a second wipe down clean before they are returned to the school libraries for other children to use. If you are the parent of a year 1 or 2 child in addition you may return their books also but this is only for parents already attending the school site. We do not want the wider group of year one and two parents returning books at this stage. We will still not be able to send books home but suggest you use Oxford owl resources and any of your own books at home to read to your children as well as hearing them read. Many thanks for your help.

Many thanks again for all the support and feedback. It has been a pleasure to have the children back in school.

With very best wishes,

Carol Rusby