



Highfields Academy

Together we inspire, always aiming higher

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Good morning everyone,

Yesterday I told you that my day had got off to a lovely start when I received Patrick's rainbow. The day finished in a lovely way too. Around teatime I received an email from one of our parents with an attached video. I now know that many of you already knew about this as so many children were included in it. I have no idea how you've all done this but I would sincerely like to thank all of you that were involved, and particularly Emily Potts for putting this together and sending it to us. It has been shared with all the staff and I think it's fair to say that there were a few tears shed. I can't quite find the right words to let you know how much we appreciate this but on behalf of all of the staff thank you very much!!

I also said yesterday that plans were progressing following the government announcement on Sunday about how we will reopen the school. What seems to be the pattern at the moment is that a brief announcement from Government is made that gives the headlines and then over the next few days more detailed information is received about what that actually means. Unfortunately this does lead to confusion and uncertainty for people.

Yesterday we had a Senior Leadership Team meeting and plans were progressing well on what we were told on Sunday. However, when the 51 page document was released yesterday afternoon there were other things in there that might change some of our thinking. The initial announcement was that from June 1st (at the earliest) schools would start to reopen for pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. I must confess that I haven't quite finished all 51 pages yet but I am well on the way and obviously I have read the bits that relate to schools. The part that seems to have come completely out of left field is that it also includes Early Years settings (ie Little Crickets). This is something that I hadn't expected to happen quite so soon.

One thing that is clear is that whatever the government advise, encourage or mandate the ultimate decisions fall to the Headteacher, the Trust Board and the Governors. It is our responsibility to ensure the health and safety of all staff and pupils on site and we will not be forced to implement actions until we are 100% sure that we can do these safely.

I did say that I would not share any details until later in the week but as so much is coming out in the media I feel that I should share some of our thinking at the moment to try and ease some concerns that you may have. I must stress that there is no guarantee that these things will happen and there are likely to be changes over the next week or two so please don't hold me to any of this, I'm just trying to be transparent with you.

Some of the points that we are currently considering:

- Opening school for pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. Class sizes may be limited to 15; therefore two classes in each year group will be implemented. Both classes would work with the teacher for part of the day and with support staff for the other part of the day.
- Staggering of breaktimes and lunchtimes to avoid lots of children being in the same place.
- Possible staggering of start and finish times to the school day therefore avoiding mass gatherings of parents at 8.50am and 3.25pm.

- Daily assemblies cancelled until September.
- Consideration of how we could start to reopen preschool provision. I think I can say without doubt that this will not be as normal from the 1st June.

My plan for today is to finish reading the 51 pages. We also have a Local Advisory Board Meeting at 6pm tonight where the governors and I will be discussing these things further. At 11.30am I will be joining the NAHT virtual conference and tomorrow morning I will be attending a virtual meeting with the primary and secondary headteachers of all Nantwich schools to further discuss arrangements for transition of Y6 pupils to high school.

Finally, the links that I sent yesterday for the music lessons this week were actually links to last weeks' lessons (not my fault this time). The correct links are included at the bottom of this letter.

Thank you all for your continued support during these times. Take care, stay safe (and alert), and keep well.

Simon Dyson
Principal

From Love Music Trust:

The email I sent on Thursday contained some of the wrong links for this week's Daily Big Sing. Monday was correct but Tuesday-Friday were last week's.

Please therefore see below the full list of correct links.

Best wishes,

'Home' lessons

- EYFS/KS1 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enP7BCGjto0>
- KS2 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uDaMfsZBC5c>

Daily Big Sing

- Monday - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwdPTlw3YF0>
- Tuesday - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYYmwjCWF1w>
- Wednesday - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3bvsGjB4ZI>
- Thursday - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o3U4x44NaJQ>
- Friday - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZPaWVQe9WA>