

**Headteacher**  
Mrs Sophie Gosden  
**Executive Head**  
Mr Neil Small B.A. (Hons), M.A., PGCE, NPQH



**National Support School**  
designated by



**National College for  
Teaching & Leadership**

3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020

### Reopening of School – A Letter from the Governors

Dear Mums, Dads and Carers

We are writing to you following Mrs Gosden's letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May, which informed you about plans for the school's reopening. In the last two paragraphs she referred to the fact that the school will be following the latest health and safety guidance and also mentioned the importance of staff training in this area and risk assessments.

One of the key roles that governors have is to monitor the school's implementation of health and safety policies to ensure the safety and welfare of your children. In view of this, governors recently met (via the internet) with Mr Small, Executive Headteacher to discuss the plans and review the school's new risk assessment.

A risk assessment is very much what it sounds like – i.e. a very detailed document (well over 20 pages) that seeks to identify issues where there is a risk and decide either how to avoid the risk or what actions to take to reduce the danger we face. We all do this when we teach our children to cross the road by using a pedestrian crossing and waiting for the "green man" before crossing. Some of us may add an extra step by still getting our child to look both ways for traffic – as you would otherwise – because experience has taught us that cars do not always stop at red lights.

The risk assessment seeks to identify all the potential hazards, looks at how to reduce the risk in each case and identifies who is responsible and when they will take the necessary actions. Each hazard identified is given an initial score based on the likelihood of it taking place and the seriousness of the outcome – e.g. scrapes and bruises from slipping on the playground to being killed while crossing the road. The assessment then takes into account the actions to be taken to reduce the level of danger or the likelihood of an event taking place and gives a residual score for the risk. Please note that in many instances in life it is not possible to totally remove the risk.

As mentioned above, the governors recently met with Mr Small to review the risk assessment that has been specifically produced to reduce the likelihood of children and staff coming into contact with the virus whilst at school. Some of the measures being taken were mentioned in Mrs Gosden's letter – e.g. splitting classes into two groups, having staggered break time and lunch breaks and the deep cleaning of the school each Wednesday.

During the meeting a large number of questions were raised about the risk assessment, the implementation of the different measures that will be taken to reduce the identified hazards and how the senior management would ensure that everyone keeps doing the things they should be doing.

Headteacher



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At the start of the meeting some of the governors who have children at The Mill and others who are not in that position had concerns that it might be too early to reopen the school. However, it was clear from the answers that we received that the school has gone into all the potential issues in great depth and are doing all they can to reduce the risks to the children's and staff's health. As a result, by the end of the meeting governors were much happier that the school will reopen.

We know that a number of you with children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 will not feel able to send them back to school because they, or other members of the household, are in an "at risk" group due to underlying health problems; however, if this is not the case, we hope that you will feel able to send them back next week.

Please be assured that we will continue to monitor what is happening at the school by holding further "update" meetings with the Headteacher or Executive Headteacher. These will focus on the measures the school has taken and their effectiveness in keeping your children safe.

The Mill Primary Academy Governors