



**Willows Academy Trust**  
**ASPIRE ... ACHIEVE ... THRIVE**  
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Dear Mums, Dads and Carers

I hope you all continue to remain fit and healthy and I would like to thank you all for your continuing support for schools during what has been and continues to be a very challenging period. For those schools who have been able to admit pupils from Nursery, YR, Y1 and Y6 they report that the plans put in place are operating smoothly and keeping everyone safe.

Schools are employing a variety of methods to engage with pupils and parents. Making good use of websites, email, Parentmail, and online learning platforms such as ClassDojo and Tapestry. All are sharing weekly home learning packs with daily English, Maths and Foundation lesson suggestions and some are providing feedback on work uploaded by pupils. Some schools are keeping in touch with video messages, online assemblies, PowerPoint presentations and zoom sessions and have completed parental surveys throughout this period of school closure.

Where schools are not using some of the above this is because presently they do not have the platform to do so. However, they are looking at the options for the future to further develop engagement with families.

I appreciate the frustrations with home schooling and the impact the ongoing lockdown arrangements are having on parent's ability to return to work. There is no one more concerned about the well-being and achievement of pupils than school leaders. It goes without saying that they would love to be able to welcome more pupils back to school, but they need to have the capacity to do so.

The government guidance released on the 15<sup>th</sup> June is very clear: "There is no expectation on primary schools to welcome back additional children where they do not have the capacity to do so. Schools can only consider bringing more pupils back if they can adhere to current safety measures and stick to the group size limit of 15 pupils" All our schools are already working at full capacity, both in terms of space and staff available. Some rooms can only accommodate smaller numbers of pupils due to size, layout and access to facilities and some staff are required to shield as they are classed as clinically extremely vulnerable. Until there is considerable change in the governments guidance on the 2m social distancing and the need for the clinically vulnerable to self-isolate it is unlikely schools will be able to admit other year groups.

The schools will continue to review and adapt their provision to meet the needs of pupils. If you have any concerns, issues or suggestions you wish to raise with your child's school, please contact the school directly and they will be only too happy to help.

Yours sincerely

J. Haigh

Mrs J. Haigh  
CEO Willows Academy Trust