

Shirley Infant School

Wilton Road

Southampton

Hampshire

SO15 5LA



**Headteacher**

Mrs C Gregory, B.Ed Early Years

**Deputy Headteacher**

Mrs L Watts, B.A Hon Primary Education

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Families,

We just wanted to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for the hard work that you have put in day in, day out through this difficult time. You are true heroes!



We have been so delighted to have all of the children back. We are so impressed with how they have coped with another change for them. Some children are getting used to having 30 in their classrooms, whilst others are getting used to the morning routines and being in a classroom again. We are so impressed with their resilience, independence, emotional support for each other and their cooperation together. We honestly could not be more proud of every single one of our children.



As we shared in our communication booklet, last week once again was about settling the children back in. We are experts now at our nurture focus weeks to settle the children and readjust them back into their routines. The staff are working on some wonderful corridor displays to demonstrate the children's work from this week, which we will share with you soon. Ask your little one to share their thoughts on the book we read 'What we'll build' By Oliver Jeffers.

As part of our risk assessment we have had the bubble numbers in identified phases of building back to a whole. In line with the government road map and the information coming from the Southampton Local Authority working Head teacher partnership group we are reviewing our current risk assessment phase. In line with many other schools in Southampton we are planning to move to Phase 3 which will be putting the children to Year Group bubbles. We would like to notify you that we will be moving to Year Group bubbles once we return after the Easter holidays.

Many considerations have been thought through and we would like to share this has not been a decision we have taken lightly. After Easter will be the right time to move the children's experience of school back to more of the structure they need. By moving to the next phase of our plan which we have always shared with you, we will be able to offer much more support to the children. The children need to build further on their social skills, cooperating skills and be supported further in their learning. The main difference is that they will be outside together where we know the research tells us the risk is minimised dramatically. Staff will be able to run group work targeted to key gaps across the year group and consolidate and move children's learning on quicker.

We want to reassure you all other aspects of the risk assessment will still stand. We will still:

- operate sections of the outside areas to each year group bubble,
- have lunchtimes in their own classrooms,
- have minimal staff movement between bubbles,
- operate the staggered start and end to the school day,
- have the higher expectations of hand hygiene

We know that bringing your little one to school and trusting all we are doing is a lot. We know need to do this in order to continue to close the gaps the children have gained through the past year due to COVID 19. If a bubble needs to close, we will have a clear idea through our own track and trace if additional children will need to isolate. This will not mean that the whole year group bubble will need to isolate if there is a case. If a bubble closes, we will move to remote learning using google classroom as we did during the national lockdown.

We thank you for working with us and continue to reassure you that all decisions we make are in the best interest of the children.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Watts  
Deputy Headteacher

