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Dear Parents and Carers

It has been so lovely this week welcoming some more of your children back into Green Lane: hearing the laughter, seeing the smiles and watching playtimes has filled us all with joy. You all know how long it took to create the reopening plan and to put the risk assessment together and it has been incredibly rewarding to see all that planning come to fruition. I thought the children might have found coming back to school a very sad experience with all of the changes, but it has been the opposite and the overarching feeling I have noticed is joy. I was on the field supervising one of the class zones when a lady walked past with her dog, she shouted over that it was wonderful to hear children playing again. You forget how important a school is to the community, not just to parents and children but to the whole community. I would thank each of you for preparing the children so well, they have reacted brilliantly to all the changes.

I started off by saying that it was lovely welcoming *some* of the children back and I am acutely aware that we have less than half of them back. We deeply miss those of you still at home and we sincerely wish that every child could come back to school before the end of term and are saddened that this cannot be. We work in schools because we love supporting children, seeing them smile and learn new skills; it is a constant regret to us that we cannot be with them all. We do however want to see them all and Mrs Linsley and I want to organise some special sessions with those class groups not in school over the last two weeks of term, we'll probably use Microsoft Teams so make sure you have an email address at the ready! We will be in touch soon with more details.

We are also very much aware of all the lost learning and the lost progress that these past few months have brought. This goes for you all working at home as well as those in school, every child's progress will have been affected. We are going to put together a catch-up package that you will all be able to access over the summer, including for the year 6 children as they prepare for secondary school. I shall be speaking to teachers about which online programmes they know will be of the most benefit and we will be purchasing a range of these that you will be able to access from home. We will also be watching the government announcements with great interest and I very much hope we may be able to access some of the tutoring that is being promised although it looks as if that won't be starting until September. You know that we will be focusing on filling all those learning gaps, we're a school that strives for the best in terms of achievement and success, we will be there with your children every step of the way.

We have been inundated with requests for children to return from the eligible year groups and from the key worker group, this means we are now at our maximum capacity apart from one space in year 6! If your child is not currently in school and they are in early years, year 1 or year 6, or you are a key worker we won't be able to automatically offer your child a place (neither can we increase the hours of the children that are in school) – but let us know your wishes and we can see if another child would be willing to go part-time so that they could come in for some of the week.

As you will be aware if a child in one of the class groups tests positive for the virus the whole of that group (including adults) will need to self-isolate for 14 days. It is also the case that a class group may need to be closed if one of the adults is ill, not with the virus, just ill, and not able to come in. We have two members of staff in each class group and if one of them is ill for a day or two we would hope to cope – but longer illnesses may mean that we can't operate that group safely. You know we will try our best to avoid this, but it is worth bearing in mind. No other adult in the school can move into a class group if they have previously been in another group (which is all adults!) and we are not allowing other people into the building, including supply teachers. Hopefully restrictions can be eased as the infection rates continue to decline (something we all want to see).

These past four months have highlighted to me even more what a special place this is to work but also what a very special community we have here. I like to think that God really does watch over us here at Green Lane.

All of your well wishes, all of your thanks, all of your love really does lift us up and it gives us the strength to carry on.

This has been the defining moment in my career and I shall never forget it, when I look back I shall do so with pride – pride for us all at Team GL!

Best wishes to you all, take care of one another,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Goffee', written in a cursive style.

Rob Goffee
Headteacher