

School return 8th March

MEMO – 5 / 3 / 21:

Update on School opening re: Coronavirus/COVID-19.

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are today approaching the conclusion of the national lockdown for schools and staff have been working hard in preparation for the full return to school on Monday morning. As we outlined in last week's newsletter, we are fully aware that this full return will have been greeted with great positivity by the majority of families, but we are also very mindful that some families and pupils may be feeling some anxiety and concerns about returning to school. We know that some of our pupils have not been back in school since the 18th December, so it will be key in the first week back that we reconnect all of the children with each other, with staff and with the logistics of school, building them back into daily routines and a school focused mindset.

Across this last week in live lessons, staff have been revisiting with the children good learning habits and routines, discussing the school day, encouraging positive sleep and breakfast routines, all ensuring the children are ready to return successfully on Monday. These sessions have also encouraged conversations and discussions which have allowed children to ask and raise any concerns or queries they may have about returning to school.

We know that one of the key areas we will need to focus on in the coming weeks is reintegrating all of our pupils back together as a whole school community. To do this, we will be revisiting training and good practice that we implemented during the start of full schooling in September last year, comprising of focusing on:

- Ensuring we have in mind a recovery curriculum, focussing on successfully reintegrating everyone back into school, re-establishing the sense of a whole school community, along with rebuilding the social and academic relationships between all stakeholders, fostering in all the trust and confidence to then move on with our learning.
- Sensitively re-identifying where every child is in their learning progression, where their strengths are and where there may be any areas for development and how we can then ensure that these are bridged and supported.
- An overarching school focus remains that every child receives challenge at the right level for themselves and that they all have their learning opportunities and progress opportunities supported and maximised in the classes they are in.

We will be doing this sensitively and supportively, as we are eminently aware that the whole country has been through, and indeed still are going through, large scale challenges, both mentally and physically. We will not be rushing anything, and will not be actively using the phrase 'catch up' or 'lost learning' anywhere near the children. As a school we happen to feel this messaging is unhelpful and the linguistic programming it can create is inherently negative. In every year group, in a 'normal' school year, pupils are at various stages of cognitive, physical and emotional development. It is our job to identify where the children are and put in place the challenge and support they need to ensure that all of our pupils make progress individually, in all areas of their development.

We know that the children's emotional wellbeing is fundamental and foundational in order for us to be able improve their academic attainment. The children will therefore benefit greatly from getting back to the structure, stability, predictable routine and social, communal nature of school.

We hope you have all had a chance to look over the additional documents we have sent out this week relating to the school return. We are aware there is a lot of information to read and take in, but we must ask that you do read the guidance, timings and protocols as the only way we can ensure the safe and continued opening of the school is if everyone follows and abides by them.

We are now all very much looking forward to Monday and seeing the children return to school. If any of you have any questions, queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to make contact with the school, with your child's class teacher or with me directly. This on-going, open communication will be vital for us all across the coming weeks as we all settle back into full school life.

Please be assured we will continue to follow the latest government and Public Health England advice and we will keep everyone updated via our school communications and if you have any concerns in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Ian Bolton
Headteacher