

Westbridge Academy

Bolingbroke Walk
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Website: www.westbridgestepacademy.org

Twitter: @WestbridgeAcad

Headteacher: Diane Thompson

Monday 22nd June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: Phase 3 Re-Opening Update

I hope that you and your loved ones continue to remain safe and well.

As you are aware on Sunday 10th May, the Prime Minister made an announcement that schools, **where possible, should try** to bring children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 back to school from 1st June; as well as the continued provision for children of Key Workers and Vulnerable Groups. All other year groups should continue to be educated at home.

As a Trust, we outlined three key guiding principles in our phased return:

1. **The safety of children and staff will be our top priority.**
2. **The main purpose of expanding provision, within Government guidelines, is to further support the communities we serve.**
3. **We respect that parents are best placed to determine whether their children come to school, if eligible, or continue learning at home.**

From the 1st June, we invited Year 6 back to school. Whilst understandably there was some apprehension, those children who returned have been pleased to be back in school and it has been a pleasure to watch them learning back at school with their peers. From Monday 15th June, we then welcomed back Year 1, which has also been heartening to see children enjoying being back in school.

Having tested our systems and processes, as well as conducting detailed risk assessments, the STEP Board has taken the decision to further extend provision from Monday 29th June; but only where academies have the capacity to do so. For Westbridge Academy, this means we will be inviting back Reception class. The situation in school will be reviewed daily and all Government guidance will be adhered to.

We will of course continue to invite children of Key Workers and Vulnerable Groups, ensuring that the children of Key Workers fall in to the categories outlined in the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Whilst I understand that this is an unknown and unsettling time, I am sure you will agree that the safety of our pupils must come first. As many of you have shared your concerns over the lack of information provided about September, as soon as the Government releases guidance about the next school year, we will of course communicate our plans with you. This will also include information about transition for your child into their next school year and class.

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In order to keep our school community safe, while adhering to government guidelines, we will make some changes to our school routines and procedures.

Please ensure that you discuss the changes with your children, as this will alleviate any concerns they may have and enable us to make the transition to a phased return to school as smooth as possible.

Beginning and end of school day

In order to maintain social distancing, we will change our routines at the start and end of the school day.

There will be staggered times for drop off and pick up and these will be at 10-minute intervals, between 8.30am to 9am and 3pm to 3.30pm. This may differ for our youngest children, who may be invited to attend on a part-time basis.

In order to keep the entire school community safe, it is essential that you:

- Take full responsibility for ensuring that you and your children are socially distancing from other families
- Arrive promptly for your allotted drop off and pick up time
- Leave the playground promptly once you have dropped off/collected your children
- Ensure that one adult per family drops off and collects children

Extended clubs

Breakfast, after school and extended clubs are cancelled until further notice.

Class sizes

Each class will be divided into small groups, which contain a maximum of 15 children. Each group will remain together throughout the day and will not mix with other groups of children. We endeavor to ensure that each group will have the same members of staff working with them until the end of the academic year. If we have to make any staffing changes (as a result of staffing shortages, etc.), we will let you know.

Break and lunchtime

We will stagger break and lunchtime to maintain social distancing and avoid groups of children coming into contact with other groups. Edward and Ward Catering will continue to supply school meals, which may be in the form of a packed lunch. Children will eat their lunch (with their group) in their classroom, or the dining hall, using disposable 'takeaway' boxes and disposable cutlery to avoid cross contamination.

Uniform

All children are expected to wear our full school uniform each day. If there are genuine extenuating circumstances that may prevent your child from wearing an item of school uniform temporarily, please inform a member of staff.

Curriculum

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During the phased return, our curriculum will focus on supporting children's health & wellbeing, new routines, co-operative learning, transition, and building confidence through the revision of key knowledge and skills that have been taught previously.

General support and preventative measures

- Children will wash their hands on arrival and will wash their hands regularly throughout the day, taking note of the hand washing posters, which are displayed next to the hand washing facilities.
- Children will be reminded about the importance of hygiene (hand washing and catching their sneezes in tissues or their upper sleeve, if tissue is not available, etc.) and how to take precautions, while remaining positive.
- Children will be reminded to maintain a safe social distance from their peers and adults at all times (though we recognise that there are occasions where this will be difficult to do so).
- All learning spaces will contain tissues and hand sanitizer (if access to soap and water is not readily available).
- Westbridge is cleaned on a daily basis, with high touch points (door handles and stair rails, etc.) cleaned at least twice each day.
- The school building will be separated into zones and groups of children will only be able to access their specific part of the building, which includes bathroom facilities, corridors and playgrounds.
- Children will be encouraged to walk on the left-hand side of the corridor.
- Movement will be reduced around the school - groups will spend the majority of their time in their own classroom during the day.
- Desks and seats will be separated (2m distance between them), if possible.
- Unnecessary items in classrooms will be removed and stored elsewhere in the school, which includes soft furnishings and soft toys that cannot easily be cleaned every day.
- Children will be provided with their own set of stationery and resources that are needed for activities and will not share with others.
- Children will sit at the same table each day, within their group, where possible.
- Outdoor equipment/apparatus/play equipment/climbing frames will not be used unless it has been cleaned between each group.
- If a child, or member of staff reports that they feel unwell on the school premises, we will make arrangements for them to go home as soon as possible.

Symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)

To protect others, you must stay at home if you or someone you live with has symptoms of coronavirus. You should NOT attend school.

If you, your child, or anyone you live with has the following symptoms you and your entire household must follow the official guidance to stay at home:

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- A new, continuous cough and/or
- A high temperature above 37.5 degrees
- A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

If an individual has symptoms of coronavirus, they must self-isolate for 7 days.

If a member of your household has symptoms, then all household members (including all children) must stay at home and self-isolate for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the household showed symptoms.

If a child displays symptoms of coronavirus while at school, they will be discreetly separated from their group and you will be asked to collect them immediately from school.

Please contact NHS 111 online or call 111 for further support and advice regarding the coronavirus.

Shielding

Shielding is for people, including children, who are at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19). Shielding children should NOT attend school. If a child is shielding or lives with a family member who is shielding (clinically extremely vulnerable – those with a GOV. letter) they should not be in school. We will continue to provide home learning resources for children who are shielding.

Travelling to and from school

As you are aware, the Government are asking us to avoid public transport unless essential and to walk/cycle/drive where possible. If you do need to use public transport and would like any further information on these recommendations then please use this link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

I know that it is an unprecedented time for us all; therefore, we must keep communicating, take precautionary measures and remain positive about all of the blessings that we have. I will be in touch with further updates over the coming weeks.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Thompson
Headteacher