



Venerable Bede Church of England Academy

Dayspring Trust



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23/10/20

Dear Parent / Carer

As we move into the half term break, I would like to thank you for the positive start to term. There have been many challenges which we have faced together, and this is likely to continue. Our pupils have really responded well to all of the changes in routines which have needed to be implemented to enable us to keep school open for the majority of our pupils. One area in which you could really support us with is to ensure that all of our pupils come to school each day equipped with a face mask. We will always support our pupils by providing a mask if they forget, but it would be really helpful if everyone could remember to bring their own. You might find this link to the latest advice on face masks in schools useful ([Face Coverings in Education](#)).

Please note that the school office is closed during the half term break. School will re-open on Monday 2 November. Our breakfast club is available from 7.45 a.m. and pupils should line up in their different yards from 8.30 a.m.

On 14 October we had a visit from the Regional Health and Safety Executive (HSE). We were selected as part of a nationwide sample of schools. The HSE came into school to audit the measures which we have put into place to mitigate the Corona Virus pandemic. They reviewed our risk assessment; walked the building looking at the measures we have in place; visited classrooms observing our pupil routines; looked at lunchtime arrangements; spoke to myself and other staff (randomly chosen); observed our pupils in corridor's. I am pleased to say that the feedback was very positive. The feedback said that that there was nothing additional we could implement to the measures which we had already put in place to make school COVID-19 secure. Our pupils were complimented on their mature approach to the new measures. I must admit that I was very reassured by this visit, and very proud of the pupils and staff.

During the HSE visit, the adviser was pleased to note that we were following the advice to keep windows open in classrooms as well as elsewhere in the building. They did indicate that this should be maintained at all times, even throughout the winter months. We were informed that windows only need to be open a fraction to allow a circulation of air, and not fully wide open. In preparation for the winter months, we have turned the heating up to full and provided each classroom with an additional electric heater. We would like to remind you that our school uniform allows pupils to wear a plain grey or black V-neck jumper or cardigan. We would recommend that pupils who feel the cold wear these additional items ([School Uniform Link](#)).

We have decided that our pupils need a break this half term too. This means that we have not set any additional work to be completed. If pupils have missed work due to absence or illness, they could always go back and complete these tasks. Here is a reminder of how to access learning resources stored in FOLDr ([Remote Learning Link](#)).



If you pick up your child from school, you may have noticed that the Sunderland Road Traffic Enforcement team have been patrolling the area. This is in response to some concerns raised by local residents regarding parents' parking at the end of the school day. I know that the overwhelming majority of parents park legally and safely. I would like to thank you for this. As the days draw in and mornings and afternoons become darker, the safety of everyone on our roads becomes critical. We would like to remind all of our pupils to wear something bright and reflective for their journey into school, no matter how short this journey is.

On the topic of safety, I will make my usual plea at this time of year for everyone to remember the rules around Halloween and Bonfire night and keeping themselves safe. The "Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service" have produced some great reminders and resources to look at ([TWFIRE Bonfire Night](#)). Please speak to your child to make sure that they can keep themselves safe.

I would like to thank all of those families who have been impacted with pupils being sent home due to being close contacts of someone with Corona Virus. We appreciate that this is never easy to manage, and that being at home learning is not a substitute to being in the classroom. We try at all times to keep as many pupils in school as possible. We follow the rules on "what is a close contact" rigorously ([Close Contacts Definition Guidance](#)). This is so that we are all protected; pupils, families and staff alike. This is likely to mean that as we move forward through this winter and on through the academic year, pupils could be impacted this way a number of times. We will do our best to minimise the impact of this by always providing work through our online learning platform. We understand that managing pupils at home brings its own challenges, and that this can be frustrating for parents (and many of our staff are parents facing these exact same issues). However, we must and will, follow the National Guidelines and mandatory frameworks in place to protect us all.

Finally, I hope that all of our pupils, staff and their families have a restful break and return refreshed for the second half of the Autumn term.

Yours Faithfully



Mr. D. Airey
Headteacher

