



# Venerable Bede Church of England Academy

## Dayspring Trust



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Headteacher: Mr D Airey (BSc Hons)

Executive Headteacher: Mrs G A Booth (BA Hons/M.Ed.)

DAI

07 March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

We wanted to share a number of things to update you on the current situation in school. As you are aware, we are in the middle of testing pupils for Coronavirus, prior to their return to school on Wednesday, March 10th. We really appreciate the number of pupils / families who have supported this drive to help make school a safer place when we return. It has not been easy testing as many pupils, but we are confident that testing pupils prior to their return to school has been the right thing to do.

When pupils return, **those that have been tested in school** will be able to take part in home testing twice each week from w/c 15th March. DFE have now published the details of how this will be managed, with school supplying the kits to those pupils and families who want their child to take part if they have given their permission – this information can be accessed by [“clicking here”](#). Pupils who have not yet been tested in school can only move onto home testing if they are tested in school 3 times over a 2-week period. If your child has been unable to take part in the testing so far, and you would like them to be able to test at home, please contact us using this link: [“general enquiries”](#) on the school website.

You may have also read that **families of school aged children are now eligible to obtain test kits** and test all members of their family. Our regional Public Health Team have put together the following web page to be shared with parents / carers which explains how members of households, childcare or support bubbles of school staff and pupils can access home test kits to support twice weekly testing and how and where they can access the kits: – [“click here”](#) to access this information. Testing is an integral part of the Government's plan to reduce the transmission of coronavirus. At the minute, the rules around anyone who tests positive for coronavirus, or is a close contact for someone who has tested positive, have not changed. A link to this section can be found by [“clicking here”](#). We hope that transmission rates continue to fall, and that cases of coronavirus in school become rarer as time goes by. However, we would like to reassure you that we will always align ourselves with the guidance from DFE and PHE. Currently, this means that pupils who have been in close contact in school with someone who then goes on to test positive for coronavirus will need to self-isolate for 10 days if they have been in close contact with them within the last 48 hours. If this does happen, work will be set as outlined in our [“Remote Learning Policy”](#).

When our **pupils return on Wednesday 10th March**, school will begin at the usual time of 8.30am (breakfast club will be open as usual from 7.45a.m.) Pupils will follow all the usual procedures which we have become accustomed to since last September and will start by lining up in their separate yards. Pupils will spend the **morning with their tutor group and their form tutor**. This is so that we can welcome our pupils back to school, remind them of the systems which they have been following so well this academic year, re-establish our links with each pupil and make sure that each pupil is ready to start face to face learning in the afternoon.



If you recall, we made the decision at the beginning of January to ask all of our pupils, except those who are medically exempt, to wear a facemask in class, as well as around school, except when they are on lunch tables. This has worked really well with those pupils who have been in school during this current period of lockdown. However, it is interesting to note that current *Government guidance for pupils who are able to wear a facemask in lessons is now that they are “highly recommended”* to do so, but that it is no longer mandatory. From Wednesday, when all pupils return, any pupils who can do so are **strongly recommended to wear a mask in lessons** in line with Government guidance ([Click here to read guidance](#)).

Please note that the guidance for pupils wearing masks in the corridors and in social spaces - except when eating or drinking - has NOT changed and this remains mandatory. All staff and pupils MUST wear a face mask when moving around the school unless they are medically exempt. If you feel that your child has a medical condition or an individual need preventing them from following this guidance, please contact Ms. S. Holt (Assistant Headteacher SENDCO) to discuss the situation.

To support our pupils, we have purchased a supply of re-useable facemasks which will be given free of charge to pupils who do not bring their own to school. We will naturally have a supply of disposable masks which pupils will be given if they forget their own (We all know how easy it is to forget a mask!). This guidance will be **reviewed at Easter in line with Government recommendations**. Once again, we thank you in advance for your support in helping to keep everyone safe.

School will be fully operational from Wednesday which includes our full lunch service, after school support and homework club. It might be sensible to check that your child has money on their school lunch account. A note to those families in receipt of free school meals: payments have been paid into your bank account up to and including Tuesday 9th March until your child can once again have their meal at school.

We appreciate that this past year has been very unusual and difficult for everyone. We understand that some families might be concerned because their child is starting to grow out of their current school uniform, and they may not be in a position currently to replace these items. We would like to remind you that we have a fantastic selection of pre-loved uniform which is freshly laundered and free of charge. We are also able to support families with the purchase of other items of school uniform such as shoes and equipment as appropriate. Please speak confidentially to your child’s Head of Year in the first instance.

Finally, we have been asked whether there will be a **Y11 Leavers’ Ball** this summer as the lockdown restrictions are eased. We did make a booking last summer for our current **Y11 to have their celebration together at the Ramside Hall on the evening of Friday July 2**. As we are all aware, the current Government “[Roadmap Out Of Lockdown](#)” states that “**no earlier than 21 June, the government hopes to be in a position to remove all legal limits on social contact**”. We can confirm that, as long as this is the case, we intend to go ahead with the Leavers’ Ball. More details regarding this will follow in due course. My advice currently is not to spend too much money or time on preparations for the Leavers’ Ball. Whilst we remain hopeful, we cannot guarantee that restrictions will be lifted. As always, any monies spent in preparations for this event is at your own risk.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this detailed letter. I know that everyone wants to see our pupils safely return to school. Please feel that you can contact us should you have further questions or comments on any aspect of the information provided.

Yours faithfully



David Airey.

Mr. D. Airey  
Headteacher



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