



Venerable Bede Church of England Academy

Dayspring Trust



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

27/08/21

Dear Parents / Carers

We hope that you and your family are well, and that you have been able to find some time to relax and unwind over the summer break. We wanted to share with you the arrangements for pupils returning to school in the autumn term, and provide an update to the changes to our risk management of coronavirus.

Pupils are due to return to school on **Wednesday 8 September** in line with the timetable below:

Y7 – 8.30 a.m.

Y8, Y9, Y10 and Y11 – 9.45 a.m.

Y7 pupils will be directed to line up with their form tutor when they arrive at the school gates. Other year groups should line up in the appropriate yard with their form tutors. In line with our usual protocol, we are asking Y7 pupils to arrive first so that they can get settled into school before the other year groups arrive. Pupils will spend the morning with their form tutor in tutor groups, and will attend timetabled lessons in the afternoon.

We have been able to streamline some aspects of our return to school due to the changes made by the Government of the coronavirus rules for schools ([Click this Link to Latest Government Operational Guidance for Schools](#)). We have always worked to minimise the impact of coronavirus restrictions on our pupils and families, whilst making sure that we keep everyone safe. We will continue to do this by implementing what we feel is the right balance of measures to ensure pupil and staff safety, whilst enabling our whole school community to have as “normal” an educational experience as possible. Ironically, some of the changes which we implemented last year, initially due to the coronavirus outbreak, have proven to be beneficial to everyone and will remain in place.

In line with Government advice, our pupils have been offered the opportunity to be tested upon their return to school for coronavirus. Please see previous communications about this. If you feel that this is appropriate for your child, follow the instructions provided. It is recommended that school children and their families continue to do two lateral flow tests per week until the end of September when this advice is going to be reviewed.

There are a few changes, outlined in the “Government Operational Guidance”, which we are making to our risk assessment ready for pupils returning in September. Schools are now **no longer required to routinely**



keep pupils in bubbles. This will no doubt make the transitions at the beginning, during and at the end of the day more straightforward. It will also mean that many enrichment activities, which involve more than one year group, can now return to their previous way of operating. We will also be able to reintroduce face to face Year Group Worship into our school routines.

It is **no longer a legal requirement to wear a face covering.** It is recommended that it might be appropriate to wear a face covering in a crowded place where you might come into contact with people who you do not usually meet. We have decided that pupils will no longer be routinely required to wear a face covering in school. Pupils and staff are able to choose to wear a face covering if they feel that they would be in close contact during the school day. It might be that someone might choose to wear their face covering in the corridors between lessons, or in the queue for lunch. If a pupil feels that it is appropriate for them to wear a face covering, we will support them in this. The same rules apply regarding the type of face covering to be worn.

We will continue to follow the principles of **good hand hygiene and the “catch it, bin it, kill it”** process. Pupils will still be asked to sanitise their hands at key points in the school day – such as upon entry to school, entry to a new classroom or the lunch server. We will no longer be asking pupils to clean down their work surfaces each lesson. Enhanced cleaning will continue each day both during and after school. Schools are still expected to keep all areas well ventilated. The government are in the process of issuing carbon dioxide monitors to enable schools to check ventilation. This might be of help when the colder winter months arrive, to keep the balance of fresh air and warmth.

Finally, the main change to our working practices is in regard to being a close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus. If you have coronavirus symptoms, you should stay away from school and book a PCR test. We will continue to work with parents / carers to look after, and send home, pupils who become unwell with coronavirus symptoms during the school day.

The main change in legislation is in regard to a person who is a **child under the age of 18 years 6 months, or an adult who has been double vaccinated.** Both these categories of individuals **no longer need to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact** for someone who is positive with coronavirus. The current advice is that these individuals should have a **PCR test** to check if they are infected, but they are **not required to isolate as long as they test negative.** If the close contact was someone that a pupil lived with, i.e. a person in their home setting, the **pupil would still be able to attend school** even though they are living with someone who has coronavirus (as long as they have taken a PCR test and it is negative).

The **responsibility to identify “close contacts” now sits with the NHS Test and Trace service and not school.** We would appreciate it if parents and carers could still let us know if a pupil tests positive for coronavirus for attendance recording purposes (using the notification page on the school website), but we will no longer be required to routinely send groups / bubbles of pupils home as a response to a positive coronavirus case.

The Government have produced a **“contingency framework”** which outlines the steps which schools may need to take in the event of a local outbreak of coronavirus ([click here for framework](#)). As we have done throughout the pandemic, we will share any changes to our working practices in school with parents as soon as practicable. We all hope that there is minimal disruption to education on our return in September, and we look forward to working collaboratively with you throughout this next academic year.



Should you have any queries regarding any aspect of the information in this letter, please get in touch with us using the "[contact us](#)" page on the school website.

Yours Faithfully

David Airey.

Mr. D. Airey
Headteacher

