

THE VICTORY PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Dear Parents and Carers of children in years R, 1 and 6,

Countdown to Returning to School

Following my letter to you of last week, I am writing to update you on how the return to school will be organised for the return of children in years R, 1 and 6 which is likely to be from after the half term holiday..

Speaking to parents and staff over the past few days, I know that many people are feeling a mix of relief and some anxiety. We are all relieved that, after so many weeks at home, children will be able to return to school and be with their friends and teachers. But likewise, I know that some parent and children will be anxious about returning after such a long time and with the on-going concerns about COVID-19 very much in our minds.

I hope, therefore, that what is set out below gives everyone the reassurance they need about how the school will operate when it reopens so that everyone is looked after well.

The safety, health and wellbeing of everyone in the school is, of course our highest priority. We will therefore be putting in place the full recommendations that the government scientists have made for 'protective measures' so that the school can be run safely, hygienically and with appropriate social distancing in place.

In its advice, the government has set out a 'hierarchy of controls' - 5 important areas that schools can act on to significantly reduce the risk of infection. I am sharing some of these key actions we are taking because the government also wants us to make sure we communicate our plans with you.

1. Minimising contact with those who have or live with someone with symptoms of COVID 19

We will continue to strictly follow government guidance regarding any staff or pupils who develop symptoms or become unwell. The government has also set out clear guidance to schools regarding any confirmed cases of COVID 19 and all staff have had additional training and guidance on this.

2. Increasing pupils and staff personal hygiene

At The Victory, we had developed lots of great practice in this area before the lockdown occurred. We reminded pupils often about the need to wash their hands more often and for at least 20 seconds each time. We will continue to focus on hand washing habits when more pupils return. We will have posters around the school and use assembly times to re-enforce important messages. In readiness for opening, we have ordered plenty of additional soap and hand gel.

3. Ensuring good respiratory hygiene

We have always had a focus on helping all pupils, particularly the youngest, to use tissues appropriately. At The Victory we will continue to support pupils to 'catch it, bin it, kill it'. We will have additional tissues around the classrooms and will be increasing the amount of times that bins are emptied during the school day

4. Increased cleaning of surfaces and equipment

Over the course of the school day, surfaces do and will get touched, for example doors or sink taps. We have worked hard with staff and our cleaning teams to ensure that such areas are cleaned more often than we would normally do.

We will need to limit children's use of shared equipment (including IT equipment). Where we can, we will give individual children their own equipment to use each time. Where this is not possible, we will make sure equipment is cleaned between uses.

5. Re-organising pupils and the school day

The biggest change to school life that we are planning for now is how we can effectively manage the number of pupils and staff that your children play and learn with.

Class Groupings

In order to make class sizes smaller and minimise unnecessary contact between groups of pupils and staff, we will be putting children into groups (or to use a Government term, 'bubbles') of 15 children who will have 2 adults as their leaders. For example, in year 6 there are 60 children so there will be four groups of 15 children. Throughout the school day the children will work and play within these groups and will have no physical contact with children or adults in other groups.

Making beginnings and ends of days easier and safer

To avoid large numbers of children and parents gathering at different times of the day, we are making changes to how/when/where pupils arrive and leave school

The school day

So that everything runs smoothly and safely, we will be making some slight changes to how we organise the school day to make best use of the space and time we have.

I will be writing later in the week to let you know which group your child will be in and arrangements for the start and end of the school day. I will also be informing you more about some of the procedures that will be taking place in the school and asking you to follow some new procedures. I am afraid that there will be quite a lot of do's and don'ts- which will be necessary in order to minimise risk.

I hope that what I have outlined in this letter gives you a much better idea of how the school will operate. There is still a lot of work to do but we are all looking forward to welcoming pupils back after half term.

I know that many parents will have questions, but I would urge you to be patient as we continue to update you over the next couple of weeks.

In the meantime, please do continue to access our daily online materials and encourage your child with their learning.

Yours sincerely



Mr J Hartley
Executive Headteacher