

THE VICTORY PRIMARY SCHOOL

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7th July 2020

Dear Parents/Carer,

Welcoming Back All Our Pupils in September

As we come towards the end of the academic year I wanted to thank all parents, pupils and staff for how the school community has worked together over the past few months. It has probably been the greatest challenge that any of us have faced as teachers and I am very proud of how we have all responded to the situation. I am particularly pleased that we have managed to provide a strong online curriculum for pupils and I would like to thank parents for all the encouragement they have given them during the lockdown to continue with their learning.

The very good news is that school will be returning in full from 7th September. This means that every year group will be able to attend, every day. This is vital for childrens' education and wellbeing and is something that we know will be welcomed across the school community.

Following the publication of the Department for Education's (DFE) guidance for reopening schools, we are now finalising our risk assessment so that we can reopen for everyone in line with the government's and scientists' advice. Key to this will be ensuring that everyone in school follows excellent hygiene practices and that we are careful about the number of different people that pupils come into contact with at school.

This will mean a number of important changes to how the school runs next term. In particular:

- *When pupils are in school, they will remain within their year group bubble. We will be avoiding any non-essential mixing of year groups;*
- *Arrivals, break times, lunchtimes and end of school will be staggered to minimise the interaction between year groups;*
- *Year groups will be separated within the school wherever possible so that pupils have access to a minimal number of classrooms and use of communal areas is strictly controlled;*
- *Classrooms in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 may be changed so that all students face forward and sit side-by-side rather than facing each other;*
- *All areas of the school will receive more frequent cleaning and there will be hand sanitiser available throughout the school. We will continue to encourage children to wash their hands regularly and promote 'catch it, bin it, kill it' for any sneezes or coughs;*
- *Sport and Physical Education will predominantly take place out of doors and contact sports will not be played;*
- *Students will have to bring in their own water bottles as the water fountains will not be in use;*
- *Students will not be allowed to bring anything else into school with them apart from their lunch;*

- *Extra-curricular clubs and activities will start when safe but only operate within year groups wherever possible;*
- *The provisional plan is for Breakfast and After-School Club to operate but pupils will be expected to sit within their year group.*

By making these changes, we will be able to follow the scientific guidance to ensure pupils are safe within the school. Families will be able to travel to and from school as normal, but we would request that you take care to follow any particular instructions around pick-up and drop-off and socially distance at the school gates.

We know that all pupils will require some degree of catch up after the disruption of the past few months. It is therefore essential that every pupil attends every day from the beginning of term so that we can quickly get back to normal curriculum content. Attendance will be required at school and will be monitored as it has been in the past. Unauthorised absence will be treated as such and followed up accordingly.

Over the summer we will be finalising the timetable for each year group and it is our expectation that a full curriculum will be offered to all students. We know that pupils thrive best when they have routine, consistency and stability around them. We will therefore be doing everything we can to ensure that, wherever possible, school life is as close to what they are used to as possible. Thus, all the academy's existing policies and expectations on issues such as behaviour, uniform, homework etc. will be in place as normal with updates as required to reflect adherence to safety and hygiene measures.

The government's scientists have also set out what will happen if any pupil or member of staff displays symptoms of COVID-19. Firstly, it is essential that everyone – pupils, parents and staff – continues to follow the NHS guidance and that they do not come into school if they are experiencing any symptoms. Thus, we would ask every parent to keep any child displaying symptoms of COVID-19 at home and immediately inform the school. Likewise, if any member of your household tests positive for COVID-19, please keep your child at home and inform us as soon as possible.

If a pupil becomes unwell at school with a high fever, new continuous cough or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they will be sent home. We will arrange for them to be looked after safely, separately from others, until they can be collected. They will be expected to self-isolate for at least 7 days and you should arrange for them to have a COVID-19 test.

Should we experience a confirmed case of COVID-19 within our school community, we will work closely with our local health protection team to ensure the situation is managed quickly and effectively. Using NHS Test and Trace data, they will advise us on what next steps – if any – we will need to take as a school. We will be putting in place stringent control measures as per the DfE's guidance in order to minimise the need for larger groups of children to self-isolate should there be a positive case within school.

In the event of any large number of students having to self-isolate or in the event of a local lockdown that means we are required to close the school, we will immediately revert to the online learning that has been working well this term. We very much hope that we do not need to return to any form of lockdown but, if we do, we are confident that we will be able to continue with all pupils' learning from home. Once again, the support of parents in ensuring children access these resources will be vital.

Finally, we know that some pupils will feel apprehensive about returning to school after such a long time away – this is natural and normal. In welcoming back some of our year groups this term, however, it was gratifying to see the smiles from the children as they met back up with friends and staff and to hear the positive feedback from parents about their experience of the return.

In September, we will of course be taking particular steps to ensure that our pastoral support for each pupil provides the right reassurance and allows time and space for any remaining worries or concerns to be addressed so that each pupil is able to enjoy being back at school.

Thank you again for your patience and understanding over the past few months. Everyone at The Victory is looking forward to welcoming our pupils back. We know that there is a great deal to do and that the year ahead may still be subject to some interruptions. But we are entirely focused on making sure that in every lesson, every day, every pupil continues to learn and thrive.

Best wishes,



Mr J Hartley

Executive Headteacher



Mrs K Jones

Head of School