



The William Henry Smith School

14th May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I do hope that you and your families are well.

Firstly, I'd like to thank you for your resilience over the last month or so, we know that it has been a challenging time for everyone, yet your positivity and creativity in supporting your child whilst at home has been astounding.

We have had no confirmed cases of Coronavirus within the school community (children or staff members) and are continuing to put practices in place to ensure the safety of our children, families and our staff team.

I know that the Prime Minister's latest announcement and details of the 'plan to rebuild' will have caused further questions and potentially increased anxiety amongst many of us. Therefore, I feel it is even more important to communicate with families and highlight our plan through to the summer break. I must point out that like any good plan, we need to factor in changes to circumstances that may mean that our strategy is adapted. We are very keen to continue to gather your views and work these into our approach.

Whilst we are working very hard to maintain a place of safety for our children, we do understand that home may be the safest place to be for the vast majority; however, it is our intention to carry on in a similar manner and with an approach which is based on a full risk assessment and case by case consideration in respect of any potential return to school.

Whilst the Government have determined that there is no expectation that schools will provide a formal academic curriculum, we are developing a recovery curriculum which will respond to the needs of children, and that harvests their experience and makes sense of it emotionally as well as cognitively. We know that our children will need time to reflect on their experiences, reconnect with adults and peers and rebuild confidence; for many a return to some form of routine will be a relief. For those families making the choice to keep their child at home, the school will continue to provide virtual opportunities for connecting them to familiar faces and encouraging *any* element of learning activity.

Many of us will be aware that the government has produced a 50-page guidance document, and whilst it will take some time to properly digest and make sense of it, given our status of being a specialist school, we will be using such guidance from both central and local government to steer our practice.

Our priorities and work in progress include:

- Planning and risk assessments around social distancing, hand hygiene, buildings & grounds, health & safety, safeguarding, transition, attendance, behaviour, curriculum, governance, policies, use of vehicles, staffing, room occupancy, emotional health & well-being, finance, residential care, therapy and SaLT & OT
- Developing a risk assessment for every child and every member of staff
- Making sure that children and adults do not attend if they or a member of their household have symptoms of Coronavirus
- Ensuring staff rotas meet the needs of our community
- Ensuring families/taxis understand the practise for dropping off and picking up children
- Ensuring our School Nurse is on site or on call 24-7

- Ensuring 1 of our 7 Designated Safeguarding Leads are on site or on call 24-7
- Promoting regular hand washing for 20 seconds and ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach. Developing a routine of hand washing every 2 hours
- Cleaning more regularly to get rid of the virus on frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, handrails, table tops, play equipment etc... and timetabling deep cleans
- Minimising contact through altering the environment as much as possible, such as changing the layout of classrooms and dining rooms, providing more break-out areas/office spaces/staff areas, identifying maximum permitted occupancy in all areas of the school, and where practical planning one-way systems
- Reducing the size of groups and considering new groups
- Minimising visitors and deliveries
- Reducing mixing groups through timetable changes, such as staggered breaks and lunch times and identifying different zones for emergencies such as fire alarm activations
- Developing a Recovery Curriculum
- Encouraging more outdoor play and learning opportunities in the fresh air
- Determining the use of face coverings and PPE (not currently routinely recommended by the DfE for use in schools) for the following purposes:
 - Intimate/personal care
 - In vehicles where 2m apart cannot be guaranteed and because of the confinement of space
 - Where any child or adult develops symptoms of Covid-19 (protocols for those who are symptomatic are in our suite of documents).

These are anxious times for everyone and I sincerely hope that the above information has offered you some reassurance. Your return of the short survey will continue to help us plan, and if you have any questions or comments please do get in touch.

Our work in partnership continues to be invaluable. Thank you.

Best wishes,



Sue Ackroyd
Principal