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**ST ALBANS**  
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

## Thomas Whitehead CE Academy

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Assistant Headteacher: Miss D Mitra

14<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

You will have heard the government announcement that schools will be open for all pupils from September 2020. We have been looking after children of key workers and those classed by the government as vulnerable since 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Last month, we welcomed back pupils in different year groups.

We approached this with caution and detailed planning. This has gone extremely well as our safety measures and risk assessments were very detailed. Thank you to all those parents who sent your children back into school as requested – it has been lovely to see them.

We are delighted that we can now look forward to seeing all our wonderful pupils back in school next term! We have been very busy planning, completing new and detailed risk assessments, and working out exactly what school will look like and feel like when your child returns.

We're working hard to consider how we group pupils together, ensure that we reduce contact between different groups of pupils, and keep the stringent cleaning processes we already have in place to ensure that our school is as safe as can be for your child.

I am planning to record a video explaining the changes we have made to drop off and collection. If you have any questions please email me: [vbritnell@twa.dsamat.co.uk](mailto:vbritnell@twa.dsamat.co.uk)

### **Drop off and Collection**

Introduction of one way system to allow for and encourage social distancing of children and parents whilst on the school site.

Only one parent/carer will be permitted on site during drop off and pick up.

Drop off 8:30 – 8:50am.

Collection 3:15 – 3:30pm.

Children passed to staff at class door.

To minimise contact parents are not permitted to enter the school building without an appointment.

Parents will need to phone or email the school office to make an appointment.

### **Class Organisation**

Phases will operate as pods and children will not mix with other pods. (EYFS, KS1, LKS2, UKS2).

Children are not expected to socially distance within their pod.

“Pods” make it much easier to track, trace and prevent the spread of infection.

Children will remain in their pod throughout the school day including lunchtimes and breaks.

Equipment and resources will be kept within pods and will be cleaned between each use.

Teachers and Teaching Assistants and other support staff can move between pods but this will be kept to a minimum.

All parents of children within a pod will be informed if a pod member develops symptoms.

The pod will remain open until a test result has been established.

## **Uniform**

Full clean uniform.  
PE kit to be in school daily.

## **Hygiene**

The children will be encouraged to wash their hands thoroughly and regularly throughout the day.

They will also have access to hand sanitiser in their classrooms.

Staff will be using anti-bacterial spray regularly to wipe down surfaces and handles.

We will remind the children to catch their sneezes in tissues and to cough into their elbows.

Staff will be vigilant in spotting any potential coronavirus symptoms.

## **Wrap around Care**

There will initially be no Before and After School Club.

## **Attendance**

The usual rules on school attendance will apply from September.

It is parents' duty to ensure that their child attends regularly at school.

Any concerns that you have that will affect your child's attendance need to be raised quickly with Family Worker Abby Souter so that we can offer support and work towards full access to school.

## **Pupil Support, Well-being and Behaviour**

We will have a strong focus upon the provision of supporting well-being that will be designed to:

Support the building and re-building of friendships and social engagement within pods

Address and equip pupils to respond to issues linked to coronavirus

Support pupils with approaches to improving their physical and mental wellbeing

We also ask that you share any concerns so that we can better support your child's emotional needs.

## **Some key points that you need to be aware of.**

You must ensure that if anyone in your household has COVID-19 symptoms, your child does NOT attend school. Any child or staff member who develops symptoms in the school day will be sent home immediately. You must follow the government guidance 'Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'. If anyone in your household, or your child, tests positive for COVID-19 you MUST inform your school.

Your child will be expected to follow strict behaviour rules relating to physical contact with other pupils, and keeping their hands clean. Pupils will be expected to/taken to wash their hands regularly, and use hand sanitiser.

Pupils and staff will not be wearing face coverings in school. The government advice is quite clear that this is not necessary. If face coverings are used on public transport to get to school, it should be removed on arrival and stored in a plastic bag

The government has advised walking or cycling to school wherever possible to reduce the use of public transport.

Attendance at school. The government has relaxed the rules on attendance during lockdown. However, this will change in September. The government guidance says:

*'Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:*

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;*
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence*
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct.'*

If your child remains under the care of a specialist health care professional you should discuss their care before returning to school in September, and talk to your school about the situation. Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, they will not be penalised.

School kitchens will re-open in September, and lunches will be available again. Pupils eligible for free school meals will return to having their lunch at school, and will no longer receive lunch vouchers.

We understand that some of you and your children will be anxious about returning in September, after some months out of school. Please be reassured that we are taking exceptional measures to make our school as safe as can be. We will be ensuring that the curriculum focuses on the emotional and wellbeing support for all our pupils.

Although it feels like this situation has lasted forever, in fact pupils will have lost by the end of term, at worst, only 70 school days of learning. And very many of them have worked hard using online resources or learning activities provided by our hardworking and dedicated teachers. We are all determined that they will absolutely not be *'a lost generation'* and we're adapting our curriculum to make sure that they get the learning and knowledge that they need to achieve success in the future.

See you in September!

Yours sincerely

Mrs V Britnell

Headteacher