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Dear Families,

Welcome back to school. It has been a very strange six months for everyone and we are all looking forward to getting back to a “new normal” in our academies. We will be keeping you up to date with any new legislation as it arises; as we have explained before, we usually get information at the same time as it is being shared in the media.

We would like to start by thanking all our staff for the hard work that has gone in to supporting children and families before the summer break and for preparing our academies to be ready for children now that we are all returning. None of us have all the answers but all our leaders are working hard to ensure that everyone is safe. All Head Teachers have completed risk assessments and, with the mitigations that have been put in place, they have graded the risks as either low or medium. The medium ones tend to relate to aspects of organisation with adults involved. We know that adults are more susceptible to the virus than children. It is vital that you support us throughout this time by adhering to new rules.

How you can help

Do not bring your child to school if they are unwell.

If there is anyone in the household with coronavirus symptoms or who has tested positive, please keep your child at home through their self-isolation.

Keep to the staggered start and finish times for your child. You will have received the arrangements for your child through separate information from your academy.

Ensure that only one adult accompanies a child to school.

When you are waiting, at drop off and pick up times, do observe social distancing.

Do not send anything into school with your child except a named water bottle and lunch box (if your child is having packed lunch).

Expectations on attendance.

The government has stated that all children should be back at school from September. We are aware that some of you will be nervous about sending your child back to school but if you have any concerns please talk to your Head Teacher, who will talk you through the protective measures that are in place.

A small number of children may not be able to attend because they are self-isolating through having symptoms, with a positive test result or they are in close contact with someone who has coronavirus.

The shielding advice for all adults and children was paused on 1st August 2020 which means that these children can now return to school. If we are informed about a local lockdown, shielding precautions may be reinstated but we will be advised if this is the case. If your child is advised by a paediatrician not to attend, please discuss this with your Head Teacher as a matter of urgency.

1st September to 4th September

We are using the first, part week, to introduce children and adults back into the academy.

The INSET days are being used to ensure that all the staff are aware of the regulations for keeping themselves,



children and their families safe.

The children will then come in small groups, for part days, to give them the opportunity to understand the new normal and for staff to be able to assess how they are, both emotionally and academically. This will support transition activities that would previously have happened at the end of the summer term.

There are separate arrangements for children starting in Nursery and Reception.

Hygiene

We will continue to ensure robust hand and respiratory hygiene. Children will have reminder lessons about washing hands and ensuring they understand about careful use of tissues etc. There will be extra time allocated to washing hands throughout the day. Our cleaners are employing enhanced cleaning arrangements. We have also designated time to clean resources that are used in the classrooms.

Face coverings

It is not recommended that children and staff in primary schools wear face coverings routinely but children travelling to school on public transport will need to wear them on the way to and from school.

Children will need to be taught how to put these face coverings on and off safely. They must be told not to touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing it and they must dispose of temporary face coverings in a 'black bag' waste bin (not recycling bin) or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag (so that they can be taken home with them) and then wash their hands again before going to their classroom.

Reducing contacts

We are maintaining social distancing between staff and children and staff with other staff as much as is possible.

All children have been organised into year group bubbles and will stay in these bubbles throughout the school day.

Adults will stay with this bubble and we will not introduce new adults into the bubble unless absolutely necessary.

This is supported by the Friday afternoon closure that we informed you about at the end of last term, as we will not require any cover for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time.

The different groups of children will be kept apart during the school day.

Classrooms have been organised to give children space and desks are facing forward.

We are actively engaging with Track and Trace to support all families.

Extended Services

We will be starting our Breakfast and After School Cubs from 7th September. Children will be organised so that there is as little movement as possible across bubbles. It is essential that you book your child into the facility as early as possible so that the optimum arrangements to minimise cross-bubble mixing can be made.

Testing

If someone shows symptoms either at home or at school, they must get a test as soon as possible.

If the test is negative, and the person feels well and no longer has symptoms similar to coronavirus, they can stop self-isolating. If they still feel unwell, they could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu, in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating.

If someone tests positive, they must self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The 10-day period starts from the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

Any member of staff who has helped a child with symptoms and any pupils who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves.

Managing cases of Covid-19

If an academy is made aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for coronavirus, we will contact the local health protection team. This team will also contact schools directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus attended the school – as identified by NHS Test and Trace. The health protection team will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate. The health protection team

will work with schools in this situation to guide them through the actions they need to take. Based on the advice from the health protection team, schools must send home those people who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious.

Close contact means:

direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)

proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual

travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home. We will keep a record of children and staff in each group, and any close contact that takes place between children and staff in different groups. Parents will be informed if needed. Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the child, young person or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms. If someone in a class or group that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves, they should get a test.

If an academy has two or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus is suspected, they may have an outbreak and will continue to work with their local health protection team who will be able to advise if additional action is required.

Four-tier system

This four-tier system was announced on Friday:

Tier 1

Schools will remain open to all pupils but with a requirement that face coverings be worn in corridors and other communal areas of secondary schools where social distancing cannot take place.

Tier 2

Primary, AP and special schools will remain open to all pupils, but secondary schools will move to a rota model, combining "on-site provision with remote education". Secondary schools will continue to allow full-time attendance for vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers with all other pupils' subject to a rota.

Tier 3

Primary, AP and special schools will remain open to all pupils, but secondary schools and FE colleges will allow full-time on-site provision only to vulnerable pupils, the children of critical workers and selected year groups which will be identified by the DfE. All other pupils will stay at home and be provided with remote education.

Tier 4

All mainstream schools and colleges will only allow full-time attendance to vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers, with all other pupils staying home and receiving remote education. AP and special schools will continue to allow full-time attendance of all pupils.

We are therefore more confident that we will remain open. There will, however, be times when some children may be at home self-isolating. The academy will ensure that there is home learning set for these children.

Local Restrictions

If we are informed that our area should be in local lockdown or restrictions are in place, we will inform you about the advice that we are given.

Yours sincerely



Christine Dickinson
CEO, The Kite Academy Trust

