



Grove Academy
ESPRIT Multi Academy Trust
Turner Street, Northwood, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 2NL
Telephone: 01782 234550 Email: grove@espritmat.org
Executive Principal & Designated Child Protection Officer: Mrs S Moran
Academy Principal & Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer: Mrs S Carrigan



“Every child deserves to be the best they can be”

Our ref: SCa.JP

5th October 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I can't believe how quickly time is going! I wanted to write to welcome everybody back to Grove, we are absolutely delighted to see you all again! We have been extremely busy so far with ensuring everything is as safe as can be, hence this letter being a little later than intended! It really has been amazing to have all of our children back with us. They have been amazing and settled so quickly into school life, even though it's quite a different school life for them! They have adapted so quickly, learning all of our rules, following our one-way systems and remembering to keep their distance as much as possible. I'm sure you can imagine how hard this is for pupils, and also for staff, however everyone is doing so well. I am especially proud of our new to Year 3 pupils, who have come into a completely new school - you would think they had always been here! We have a very rigorous risk assessment, which we constantly review and make changes whenever they are needed to improve our safety. Every time this or the parent handbook is changed, we update them on our website so that they are always accessible to parents and carers.

I must also thank parents and carers for ensuring that their children are wearing our very smart academy uniform. Our children look outstanding, and I can tell how proud they are to be wearing it! Just a reminder to make sure that any child with long hair has it tied back every day, and to ensure that training shoes must be black.

We are very grateful to parents and carers for their support with our safety measures regarding arrival and dismissal. We understand that these can be inconvenient, when you are having to queue up, and especially difficult for those with more than 1 child at Grove. However, government guidance states that we must keep bubbles separate at all times (our bubbles are year groups), therefore these pupils cannot cross over on their way into and out of school. I would like to respectfully ask all parents and carers to wear a face covering when queuing outside school and on school grounds. This is to help protect each other and especially staff who are on the gates and coming into contact with a great deal of people every day. The last thing we would want is to have to close a class or bubble because there is a case of Coronavirus in school, so please do your part in protecting us all:

- Hands – wash your hands more often
- Face – wear a face covering when in and around our grounds
- Space – stay on the yellow spots when queuing to enter and don't gather around school with other parents and carers

Many parents and carers have told us that they actually prefer the new arrangements for arrival and dismissal as they are much calmer, and everyone has more space. We are beginning to think we may not actually go back fully to how it used to be!

Unfortunately our academy is completely land-locked by busy roads, with no parking space for school staff; and many businesses in the vicinity. This makes it extremely dangerous for our community when arriving at and leaving school, as the roads are very busy. I am asking for your support to protect our Grove family by not parking dangerously on

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pavements, or driving too fast. When cars park on the pavements close to school, not only does it make it difficult for parents and carers with pushchairs to get past, it obviously makes it very dangerous for children to cross the roads. Please help us all stay safe, even if you have to park a little further away.

Last year we tried a few different ways to improve our PE provision, including using Northwood Stadium, as our grounds and facilities are very limited. Many parents and carers told us that they would prefer some active time every day instead of a whole afternoon of PE once a fortnight. We have therefore introduced a daily active 30 minutes, in addition to the fortnightly PE lesson. The aim is to encourage children to enjoy being active and improve their overall fitness. We have also introduced an active mile at least once a week. This takes place right outside my window so I can often see how well the children are doing, and they absolutely love it. It's so great to see them getting rid of some of their energy and improving their fitness every week! I promised I would join in with this, but I seem to have forgotten my trainers every day so far..... I have to say that children wearing their black training shoes to school every day has also been a huge success and has made the daily active time much safer and easier, so once again, thanks for supporting us.

Many of you will know that prior to the pandemic, our BASC (before and after school club) was located at the infant schools, and we used a walking bus for Grove children to access this. However, due to the pandemic we have had to quickly organise and run our own BASC provision at Grove. This has been challenging, but we are thrilled to say we have a very successful BASC, which our children are loving. We have Mrs. Saunders, Mrs. Sheldon and Mr. Hannon running this club, and children enjoy a wide range of activities, being outside as much as possible. I would like to thank parents and carers for being patient whilst we got this up and running, and BASC staff who have created an amazing club in no time at all! Please get in touch with our office if you require a place at this club.

I would like to reassure you that we will still be celebrating events such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter, but these will look different from the 'norm' you are used to. We are working on planning how we can carry out/capture these events in a virtual/digital way, so you can still enjoy seeing your child/ren in the 'MAGICal' events we usually host.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the staff at Grove for their huge effort in educating and caring for our children in these difficult times. Everything is so different, and makes it difficult to function. We all miss having as much face-to-face contact with each other as we would like – meeting on video link is just not the same! However, as always, our family pulls together, gets on with it and supports each other so that we can educate, nurture and care for our children. I am so very grateful for their hard work and support.

As always, thank you for your continued support. It is very much appreciated, especially in these current, difficult times.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Carrigan
Academy Principal

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