



**Hamilton Academy
ESPRIT Multi Academy Trust**

Barthomley Road, Birches Head, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 6NW
Telephone: 01782 234420 Email: hamilton@espritmat.org



Executive Principal & Designated Child Protection Officer: Mrs S Moran
Academy Principal & Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer: Mrs Y Glaister

Our ref: YG.MW

5th October 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I wanted to let you know how proud I am of how the children have settled back into the school routines. They have used their 'Goofy gumption' to adapt to the strange situation that they have found themselves in amazingly. They are all displaying super 'MAGIC' learning attitudes and have adapted to the changes in school really well. I am also 'wowed' by how our nursery children have settled in the nursery and their routines, without their parents and carers. Many of the nursery children are even leaving their adult at the gate – what big boys and girls!

Thank you for being so patient with the processes we have put into place, to support us in adhering to the government guidelines during the morning drop off and afternoon collections. This is helping us to ensure the transitions to and from school run smoothly, ensuring no bubbles cross, are as swift as possible, and everyone is safe. I would just like to take this opportunity to remind you about not arriving before your allocated drop off time to help keep congestion to a minimum and support social distancing (I am aware if you have more than one child, arriving early cannot be avoided). Due to the school being land locked, we appreciate how difficult it is to socially distance around the perimeter of the academy in the surrounding streets. Therefore, with the raising numbers of COVID cases being reported now each day, and the rule of six being introduced, it is really important that we wear face masks (covering nose and mouth) to help prevent the spread of COVID further during drop off and collection. Please also be mindful of our neighbours who live in the surrounding areas whilst you are waiting to drop off and collect your children.

All of the processes we have put in place to ensure that all of our children and yourselves stay safe, are outlined in our parent handbook, which can be found on the academy website. We are continually reviewing our risk assessments for the academy to ensure the safety of all and to help mitigate against any risks of spreading Covid. We welcome your feedback to support us with this and the measures we put in place to ensure we are following government guidelines and are reducing the risk of Covid transmission. Each time the parent handbook is updated we will communicate this to you via class dojo. Therefore, if you have not yet signed up to class dojo please do so, as this is the main route of communication with your child's class teacher and with the school.

I would like to further explain the new timings for the school day, as a few parents have enquired about the reduced time of the school day and are concerned how their child/children are going to 'catch up' if the day is shorter. Due to the government guidelines asking schools to plan staggered entry and collection times, to keep groups apart (bubbles) and to avoid busy rush hours where possible, whilst also keeping teaching time the same, we have had to review our school day times. I would like to reassure you that the teaching time has not been reduced for the children. The transition time in a morning has been reduced from 25 minutes in a morning to only 5 minutes and teachers now only have 30 minutes for their lunchtime instead of 1 hour. All of the transition times throughout the day have been reduced, ensuring there is no lost learning time. One example is whole school assemblies, which cannot take place in the hall due to bubbles mixing. Therefore, we are now holding assemblies in the classrooms and the time that the children spent tidying away the classroom, entering and leaving the hall has now disappeared. This means that each day, 15 minutes more is gained for teaching time too.





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In line with the government recommendation that children have 30 minutes of exercise each day to improve their fitness, teachers are now teaching 30 minutes of structured PE each day, which takes place outside when the weather permits.

Unfortunately, we were not successful in securing the lottery bid we were hoping to, that we were going to use towards developing our school playground. We will be working closely with the school council to plan fund raising events throughout the school year to fund this ourselves. We need to raise approximately £11,000 to purchase a trim trail for the children to explore. Last year we managed to raise £1,000 towards this total. Therefore, your contributions are very much needed and appreciated through your weekly school fund donations and all fundraising events we hold. Any ideas for fund raising will be gratefully received!

Lastly, 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.

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

Yours faithfully,

Y. Glaister

Mrs Glaister
Academy Principal

