



WHYTRIG MIDDLE SCHOOL

One of the Seaton Valley Federation of Schools

Elsdon Avenue, Seaton Delaval, Northumberland NE25 0BP

Tel: 0191 2371402 Fax: 0191 2371830

Email: admin@whytrig.northumberland.sch.uk

www.svf.org.uk

Executive Headteacher: John Barnes

Head of School: Jonathan Souter

21 May 2020

Dear parents, carers and pupils

I am writing to give you some further information about Year 6 pupils returning to Whytrig Middle School on 1st June. This also applies to the provision for vulnerable children and the children of key workers from other year groups that is also taking place in school. Clearly it will be a very anxious time for you as a parent to send your child back to school, it will be an anxious time for your child and it also will be for staff. Our staff want to be back at school teaching the children but are also naturally worried for their own health and that of their families. I hope that the information that I am about to share with you will again reassure you that the health and safety of pupils, staff and families is our prime concern.

Following the announcement from the Prime Minister on 10th May, indicating that schools could start to re-open from 1st June (in our setting, having Year 6 children return) we started to draw up ways in which we could do this safely. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have put together very detailed and robust plans, in line with the Government and Northumberland County Council (NCC) guidelines, which are updated regularly, to ensure the safety of all pupils and staff and I would like to outline these for you now. As I said in my letter which was sent to all of our parents, Whytrig will look very different in June and your child needs to know it will not be the same as when they left it in March.

Below outlines how Whytrig will begin to open the doors and have our Year 6 children return to school. These plans have been created based around the responses of parents who have told us their child will return to school on 1st June. We have had a number of parents who have naturally been undecided as to whether to send their child back to school. If at a point in the future a decision is made to send the child to school, that must first be done in consultation with the school to ensure we have the capacity to accommodate them. Obviously if there are any significant changes to the local or national picture, this could change again. We will of course keep you informed throughout.

- Children will be working in groups of a maximum of 12 pupils with one teacher and usually one learning support assistant (LSA).
- There will be 3 groups of Y6 pupils and they will usually be based in their form classes (we will let you know your child's group number separately).
- No child should arrive at school unless it has been confirmed in advance that they have a place in one of the groups.
- Children will remain with their allocated group at all times in their designated room or outdoors for any outdoor learning. At break and lunchtime, they will be allowed outside with their group but must remain socially distant, as far as it is possible (children will be expected to follow these guidelines at all times)..
- Key times of day - entry to school, break, lunch, end of school - will be staggered for each group to make sure there are no congregation points and to minimise contact between groups of children (further details on times of school day below). It is therefore essential that your child arrives at school on time at the set time for their group.
- Pupils will be met by staff at the school gate at the allotted time to ensure social distancing is followed (children should maintain a 2 metre gap from other pupils).



- Parents are asked not to walk their children to the school gate to avoid congregation points and to minimise contact with others.
- Parents are reminded not to drop children off outside the school gates if arriving by car. Please park at a safe distance and ask your child to walk the remainder of the journey.
- Parents must not come onto school premises without an appointment.
- Children will be expected to wash their hands regularly and at key times of the day - on entry to school, after break, before and after lunch and before leaving school. Time has been built into lessons so this can be done safely. Children will be supervised during these times to make sure social distancing is observed.
- All Year 6 children will be based in classrooms in Key Stage 2 and in our mobile classrooms.
- Children will sit 2 metres apart from their peers at a desk which will remain theirs throughout this process.
- Children will not be able to move around the room to talk to their friends, if their friends are in their group.
- Children will be allowed to use the toilets at any time but this will need to be done one at a time to avoid congregation points. An adult will take them to the toilet area to check that social distancing is in place each time.
- Hand sanitisers will be located in all classrooms, entrances to school and office areas, where children will be expected to use them especially when entering and exiting buildings.
- Tissues will be in each room for "catch it, bin it, kill it".
- Children will be taught by the same team of teachers each week. Teachers will work on a rota so that one teacher will take the morning sessions and the other will take the afternoon sessions. This will allow our staff to continue to set Google Classroom work for other year group teaching responsibilities they have.
- The children will work on lessons in line with the Y6 curriculum but these will be mixed ability lessons and pupils will not be in sets for Maths and English. The work that we will deliver in school will be consistent with the Google Classroom work that is being set for children at home.
- Vulnerable children and the children of key workers from other year groups will be working in a separate group with work set in Google Classroom, as they have already been doing in the open school provision from 23rd March. These children will be based in classrooms in the Key Stage 3 area of school.
- The school hall and Astley main building will be out of use.
- No assemblies will take place.
- Pupils should wear non-uniform; comfortable clothing that would be suitable for outdoor activities. Clothes must be removed as soon as the child returns home and washed immediately. They should attend in clean clothes the next day (this should include their coat where possible).
- No equipment should be brought into school - children will be provided with a plastic folder containing all necessary stationery that they will need and it will be theirs to use throughout this period. They will be able to store their work in it and it will remain on their desk and not be used or handled by anyone else.
- Children should bring in a packed lunch in a disposable bag, so it can be thrown away (including any waste) afterwards. This will be eaten in their classroom. We understand that this goes against the good work we have done around plastic pollution and parents would prefer to send in packed lunch boxes. We are prepared to review this procedure once the new routines are established but until further notice no lunchboxes please.
- Your child will have access to water from school (no water bottles in school please).
- If a child can not follow these guidelines or the instructions of school staff, they may be asked to leave the provision.
- For serious behavioural incidents or any actions that endanger the health and safety of children and staff, consequences in the school behaviour policy will continue to apply.

Group Start Times

Groups 3 and 5: Start time 09:00; End of school day 15:00

Groups 2 and 4: Start time 09:10; End of school day 15:10

Groups 1 and 6: Start time 09:20; End of school day 15:20

When I think back to how we felt in March when we had to say goodbye to our pupils, I don't think anyone could have anticipated that we would ever have to make changes like this to a school which is very close to all our hearts. Having read the above points, you may feel that the above measures seem very rigid and Draconian. It is essential, however, that these measures are strictly followed, in order to protect all pupils and staff. We will,

therefore, be requiring parents to complete a home school agreement which reinforces these expectations and should be completed and returned prior to children returning on 1st June.

I hope that the measures I have outlined, provide you with the information that you need to make an informed decision about sending your child(ren) into school. If you prefer to keep your child(ren) at home that is absolutely fine. There will be no consequences for non-attendance. For parents who have already confirmed to us that their child will return on 1st June, we will send details of their group and start time next week. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mr J K Souter

Head of School
Whytrig Middle School

