



WHYTRIG MIDDLE SCHOOL

One of the Seaton Valley Federation of Schools

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Executive Headteacher: John Barnes

Head of School: Jonathan Souter

25 March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of the Spring Term and the Easter break, it seems quite strange to be writing this letter, given we have only been back in school together for three weeks. Of course we know that does not reflect the overall picture, with two weeks of the half term and eight weeks in total over the course of the Spring Term completed remotely. Overall, the children have settled back really well into our school routines and the break comes at an opportune time, where we can all take stock of things, recharge our batteries and get ready for the final term of the school year. We can hopefully look forward to a summer term where there is the possibility of school life returning even more towards the 'old normal'. Of course a lot of that will depend on the picture both locally and nationally and how we are all moving along the Government roadmap out of lockdown. In school we will continue to follow the measures we have put into place to try to keep everyone safe and minimise the spread of the virus. It is also important that we all continue working together to follow the rules out of school as we start a two-week holiday. Hopefully as a result we will all be able to have the summer term and the eventual the summer break that we all crave.

I would like to take this opportunity to clarify details of the forthcoming holiday periods and key dates:

Easter Holidays

School closes to students:

Friday 26th March

School re-opens to students:

Tuesday 13th April

Summer Term

Monday 12th April 2021 is a Teacher Training day - Pupils are not in school on this day.

Tuesday 13th April 2021 - School will re-open for all pupils. Existing daily start and end times for each year group bubble will continue as per the current arrangements. Children should continue to only bring a packed lunch box (if not on school meals) and a water bottle in to school each day. Small bags are only permitted for those who journey to school by bike or scooter.

School Day and Entrances

Year 5 pupils should arrive at 8:35am through the main gate and line up (socially distant) in their form class to be collected by their form teacher at 8:40am.

Year 6 pupils should arrive at 8:45am through the main gate and line up (socially distant) in their form class to be collected by their form teacher at 8:50am.

Year 7 pupils should arrive at 8:35am through the gate access at the far end of our yard on the corner of Whitfield Road and Swinburn Road and line up (socially distant) in their form class to be collected by their form teacher at 8:40am.

Year 8 pupils should arrive at 8:45am through the gate access at the far end of our yard on the corner of Whitfield Road and Swinburn Road and line up (socially distant) in their form class to be collected by their form teacher at 8:50am.

School Uniform and Appearance

Could I please ask all parents/carers to ensure that all pupils return to school, smart and organised for the final term of this school year. This includes making sure that pupils are following our school's policies on uniform, hairstyles (please ensure that any 'holiday haircuts/styles' do not breach the school rules for the first day back) and jewellery. In particular, can you please ensure your child is wearing the correct footwear for school. **Children should not wear trainers for school unless it is a PE day.** We appreciate there have been some issues replacing footwear during the lockdowns and closure of non-essential retailers and our approach throughout the year has reflected that. The forthcoming holiday is a good opportunity to ensure that you can get everything that is required for your child to return to school following the school expectations around uniform. We appreciate your support in this area in order to maintain our very high standards and would like to thank the majority of parents/carers who continue to ensure that their child has everything they need for school.

Free School Meals

Families entitled to Free School Meals will be issued with a £45 supermarket voucher to cover the Easter Holiday period. This is made up of £15 per week plus an additional £15 funded by the DWP Winter Support Grant. Any queries regarding these vouchers should be directed to the Finance Department, finance@svf.org.uk.

Contact Tracing

If your child develops symptoms of Covid-19 at any time over the Easter holidays you should arrange for them to have a PCR Test as soon as possible. If this test returns a positive result, you should contact school as a matter of urgency in order for us to carry out close-contact tracing. Please email reception@svf.org.uk or telephone the School Office on 0191 2371505.

Home Testing

Parents/carers who requested home-testing kits have already been issued with kits containing 6 tests. The Government have recently updated their guidance in respect of Easter holiday testing with the statement below:

Testing at home throughout the Easter holidays for schools and colleges

Following the success of the asymptomatic testing programme on the return to school and college, it is vital to keep testing at home throughout the Easter holidays and into the summer term. Please follow the instructions given in the bullet points below:

- test twice a week at home from now on (all those who are able to)
- report results online as positive, negative or void. This information is critical in helping us to understand the prevalence of the virus across the country
- continue to test twice weekly over the Easter holidays
- test before returning to school or college for the summer term, either the night before, or morning of, the first day back, to find and isolate any positive cases

Families and households can also access [home test kits for adults](#).

In the event a home test kit shows a positive result, the Government guidance is very clear that the individual must isolate and [book a confirmatory PCR test as soon as possible](#). Their household and close contacts must self-isolate immediately, **whilst awaiting the outcome of the PCR test**. If the PCR returns as **positive**, all parties must carry out a 10-day isolation. If the PCR returns as **negative**, all parties can end their isolation immediately and return to normal. It is important that any positive results, whether they are from home test kits or a PCR test, are reported to school as soon as possible, including over the Easter holidays. Please email reception@svf.org.uk or call 0191 2371505. Students at all three of our schools will be supplied with enough home testing kits to continue testing over the Easter holidays and into next term. Should you have any questions regarding home testing, please contact the School Office.

Summer Term Important Dates

Monday 12 April	Teacher Training Day
Tuesday 13 April	Children return to school
Monday 3 May	May Day Bank Holiday
Friday 17 July	End of Summer Term

May Half-Term Holiday

School closes to students:	Friday 28 May 2.55 – 3.10pm
School re-opens to students:	Monday 7 June 8.40 – 8.55am

Year 5 Swimming Lessons

Year 5 will be returning to swimming in PE lessons after Easter on the week commencing 19th April. We will be grouping children according to their swimming ability, which will help us provide appropriate sessions for each child. If you could please complete the Google Form which has been sent to parents this week this will then enable us to put the correct groups together. Alternatively you can use the following to open the form: <https://forms.gle/1J68sqWRTGGtLNEH8>. When swimming groups have been arranged, exact dates of swimming sessions for each group will be sent out.

You can find all the key dates in the school term on our website calendar at <https://www.svf.org.uk/calendar>.

We hope that everyone has a really enjoyable Easter Holiday and we look forward to seeing everyone back in school for a successful Summer Term.

Kind regards,

Mr J K Souter
Head of School