

WILLOW TREE ACADEMY



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Visit us at: www.willowtreeacademy.org

Mr A. Trueman – Chair of Trustees Mrs J.K. Fearnley – Chief Executive Officer

Dear Parents

I hope you and your family are well and are enjoying the lifting of some restrictions, in line with the Prime Minister's Roadmap out of Lockdown. We are very happy to tell you that since the **8th March** our schools have reopened successfully. However, it has not been 'plain sailing' and we have had some positive cases throughout April and May, necessitating bubble closures and self-isolation.

The Prime Minister's briefing on Monday night was reassuring; the country is moving to Step 3 and this is based on the four 'tests' being met in terms of the effectiveness of the vaccination programme, the impact of this on infection, transmission and death rates, the relieving of pressure on the NHS and the control of new variants. The PM did place the responsibility back on the nation to protect ourselves, urging real 'caution' and 'choice' in what we do from now on.

In effect it's over to us now; for this reason some of the same controls and measures that have remained in place from September 2020 can be adjusted with caution. Our Strategic Closure Team has met and discussed the relaxing of these across the Willow Tree Academy. Below I explain the ones we discussed. Please note that not all our schools have made the same decisions, as these have been based on the context of the school also. You will be notified of any specific changes or relaxations to school procedures that differ to general academy policy below.

We remain determined to do the best we can to ensure all our children, staff and families are safe and transmission remains low.

Children	
Music service	The music service personnel will be allowed into school as essential visitors
Starts and finish times	The start and finish times continue to ensure at least 25 hours of teaching time.
Staggered breaks /equipment use	To continue/bubble equipment remains in place and sanitised after use
ICT Suite	Room sanitised after use

Classrooms/seating/sanitising	Return to group tables/sanitising and cleaning to continue
Removal of bubbles across school	Not planned until June 21st at the earliest could be September
Routes in and around school for children	These are working and will remain in place > July 21
Sanitising and Hand washing Children	This good practice will remain
Shared dining facilities	Restrictions in place for bubbles until at least June 21st
Return to yr group bubbles	This will not happen prior to July 21
Visits and residentials	We have cancelled all residentials this year however will be rearranging some day visits
Teachers and Support Staff	
Use of masks and sanitiser staff	Staff will continue to wear masks around school/sanitiser/staggered use of staff rooms remain
Staff crossing of bubbles staff cover	This will be allowed to ease the staffing during visits, absence etc
Testing with Lateral Flow Devices	All staff to be tested twice weekly, families encouraged to do this too
Social distancing staff	Bubbles remain and only essential staff will cross bubbles
Aeration of rooms	This will be an imperative
Cleaning	Normal cleaning timetables will be returned to
Cleaning of school - additional	This to continue until July, funded by WTA
Return to yr group bubbles	This will not happen prior to July 21
Parents	
Parents' meetings in school SEND	Parents of children with SEND will be allowed to attend reviews, masks and social distancing
New Starters	Parents of 2Y0/F1/F2 children new to our schools will be allowed to visit from June 21st
Routes in and out of the grounds/parents	Very successful, meet social distancing requirements as they stand, these will remain >July 21
Attendance	We are up scaling our Attendance Policy to ensure all children attend school daily
Breakfast Club	These will be implemented after half term and reviewed> review following June 21st > Bagels to continue
Parents' meetings with secondary school	These should be arranged virtually with the secondary personnel
Transition Y6 and all classes	Y6 will leave our schools on the 5th July, all other children will move to new teacher
FSM May holiday	Vouchers for Free School Meals will be allocated for the Spring Bank week

We know you will be looking forward to May 17 and June 21, and the time when the country will emerge from Lockdown so we can try to get back to normality.

Please note that school will continue to close at 1.30pm every Friday to allow for Deep Cleaning and PPA time, this is working extremely well. We have adjusted our timetable to ensure at least 25 hours of teaching time, this is well above the national average. Where children need additional support we will use Catch-up funding to help them. **In the future we are considering consulting with parents regarding this time table change as the vast majority of parents are happy for it to continue.** Well-being, family time and time for homework being mentioned as positives. For parents needing child care on a Friday pm, this could be accommodated through paid-for provision.

Please note all children will be expected to attend school **every day** and we will continue with our first day call-outs and rigorous safeguarding procedures.

Unfortunately, residentials have had to be cancelled but we are hoping that some educational day visits can now go ahead. We are encouraging teachers to plan to use the local environment and children will continue to be outside as much as possible. Our curriculum is just as amazing as ever!

I hope this has answered some of your questions regarding the rest of this term, but please contact school with any queries.

Once again I urge you to keep going; we need to ensure that all our staff are safe and well and that all children are coming to school from families that are Covid-free. If we work together it will enable everyone to come through this crisis, please protect your children and family by upholding the guidance on social distancing and follow the Hands, Space, Fresh Air advice. Once again, if you are in any doubt that you may have Covid-19 or been a contact, please get tested and keep your child at home.

Thank you all again for your continued support in these challenging times.

There is no doubt that together we can beat Coronavirus CoVid-19 and keep healthy and happy if we work together. It promises to be a wonderful term full of exciting learning opportunities for your children.

Together Anything Is Possible

Kind regards

Mrs Jane Fearnley
CEO/Executive Head Teacher

Mr Tony Trueman
Chair of Trust

Ms Louise Greenwood
Head of School