



“Believing is Achieving”

Friday 8th May 2020

Dear Parents, Carers

Over the coming weeks we will be in touch with you about partially reopening the school for more pupils to attend. Please do not send your child to school unless it has been agreed with us beforehand. Transition back to school will have to be done in an organised way to mitigate the risk of contracting and spreading coronavirus/Covid-19. We must not forget that the country is still in a crisis situation and in lockdown. Unfortunately Shepwell may not be open properly until September 2020 at the earliest.

Key issues for us all to consider

Don't pretend that everything is normal

For many of us, adults and pupils, the return to Shepwell will be greeted with a huge sigh of relief and we will want to pretend that the world is returning to how it was, but we will all have been changed by the experience of Coronavirus. It will take time for us to adjust to the 'new' normal. We will need to recognise and allow for this by being supportive and kind to each other and ourselves.

Re-establishing routines

For many the re-establishment of routines will be difficult, particularly pupils with autism. This will not just be for school routines; it will also be for those basic daily life routines, such as sleep and getting up. We know that this is difficult and a source of anxiety at the beginning of every term, but this will be on a much larger scale. We will need to allow a period of adjustment and be aware of the impact of trying to re-establish these routines for staff, parents and pupils. We will need to re-learn the rhythm of the school.

It is important for the transition back to school to involve a routine being put in place swiftly as pupils prefer routine and it gives them a sense of security. However, some families may struggle and it is important for all Shepwell staff to acknowledge this and offer help where needed.

Re-establishing expectations

We are aware that different people will have had very different experiences during the lockdown. Some will have been in Shepwell for short periods of time, though for them school will have been a very different place. The majority of pupils will have been at home and each of them will have had their own experience. It will take time to re-establish and re-learn the expectations of school behaviour and learning. We know that much of learning is based on practice and some pupils will all be out of practice with this. The key here is re-establishing behaviour expectations because learning will only happen when this is all established.

Differences in learning

There will be a huge range in what learning pupils have engaged in while not in school. There will be pupils who have spent every day, including the holidays, engaged in formal learning activities and completed every piece of work set by the school. Equally, we are well aware that there will be pupils who have not engaged in any focused learning activity for the entire time they were not in school. Most pupils will come somewhere in between. We will need to respond to what pupils have learnt, not what we expected them to have learnt. We will need to understand what pupils have learnt and what they have forgotten.

Even more, those who have been a carer for a sick relative or dealt with grief for someone they couldn't see. This learning and possible trauma is not on the curriculum and must be taken into consideration and Shepwell staff will show compassion.



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Assessing learning at Shepwell

We will do this informally, to restart pupils learning without formal testing will help us focus on re-building relationships and help to ease the anxieties about restarting formal education. It will be more important to value and celebrate what pupils have learnt during transition. We will spend time allowing the pupils to ‘show and tell’ what they have been doing, what they have learned and what their lives have been like over the lockdown. We can then assess them academically as well as socially and emotionally.

Separation anxieties

The majority of pupils will have become use to being with their parents and immediate family for an extended period. Even for those who are excited to regain their freedom and see their friends, this is a potential source of anxiety. There will be pupils who struggle with this separation and experience anxiety while they are in school, particularly where their family includes key workers or those going back to work in crowded spaces.

Pupils Reporting Symptoms of Coronavirus.Covid-19

Parents must continue to contact the school to report that their child has symptoms connected to the infection/illness. Children must be kept at home if they are ill. Parents should use the **111** online coronavirus service to find out what to do next. **Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.**

Whilst in school, any pupil showing symptoms of the infection/illness whilst on site should be isolated from other persons so far as practical (showing all due care and concern for the individual) and the parents or carers contacted so the pupil can be collected directly. Use of public or school transport to return the pupils home should be avoided.

Infection Control

It is important to remember that infections/illnesses can spread from one person to another when an infected person has symptoms (i.e. coughing and sneezing). General infection control practices and good respiratory hand hygiene can help to reduce transmission of all viruses. This includes:

- Covering your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible
- Disposing of dirty tissues promptly and carefully
- Maintaining good basic hygiene, for example washing hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of the virus from your hands to face or to other people

Parents are asked to support the school in minimising the spread of infections/illnesses by reinforcing the above good hygiene practices.

To safeguard all staff and pupils following is taken from our action plan. Thank you in advance for your cooperation during this very difficult time.

- School will be open Monday to Thursday 9.30am – 2.15pm
- **Face masks will be provided and MUST be worn at all times – non negotiable**
- **Pupils & staff must observe social distancing regulations at all times**
- **On arrival pupils must wait outside and stand by yellow cones to observed social distancing.**
- **Pupils must shower EVERY DAY and wash their hands regularly throughout the day**
- **Pupils MUST use hand sanitiser at least once an hour. Hand sanitiser is available in every room in the school**
- **Pupils MUST wear CLEAN clothes EVERY DAY. In order to help our parents pupils do not need to wear school uniform until further notice.**
- Key stage 3 will attend 10.00am-12.00pm & Key Stage 4 will attend 12.30pm-2.30pm - to be confirmed and reviewed weekly



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- Maximum of 3 pupils in each classroom
- Pupils will stay in one classroom during the school day
- **Parents are not be allowed in school unless to speak to reception staff**
- **Children must be dropped off at the school gate**
- Parents must not approach the reception window and must stand in the marked out area in reception
- Staff will wear face visors when administering first aid
- KS3 & KS4 will have staggered break time and lunchtime
- Free school meal vouchers will continue to be issued during the pandemic
- One way system will operate throughout the school
- Pupils will enter the school by the main reception door and will leave through the door at the far end of reception that leads into the playground
- School trips will not happen again until further notice
- Formal teaching will not take place until September 2020. During the remainder of the summer term we will follow an engaging curriculum that includes practical activities and informal study

If you have any questions please free to contact us.

Kind regards

Stephen Pritchard-Jones

Mr S. Pritchard-Jones
Headteacher