

Rationale for Reopening Plans - Westerton Primary Academy

September 2020

Following the success of our June 2020 Reopening Plan, in that we have been able to progressively invite **all** year groups back to access education for two days per week this term, we are now in a position to consider the continuation of this for September. However, we must acknowledge and understand that **over a third of our pupil population have not attended school since the lockdown in March, due to the need to shield and ongoing anxiety**. Likewise many colleagues with underlying health issues have also been unable to attend the premises this term, notwithstanding all the safety and hygiene measures in place.

Again, a comprehensive Risk Assessment for reopening our premises for pupils and staff has been undertaken with full consideration of the ongoing and differing guidance provided by the following sources:

- Health and Safety
- Human Resources
- Professional Unions
- Leeds City Council
- School inspection guidance
- Government.

We have also continued to negotiate the balance of our moral imperative to be **inclusive and address the anxieties** of everyone to be able to keep safe.

Congestion

It is worth repeating that Westerton is a very large, three form entry academy with 708 primary children on roll. It is **over-subscribed** with 90 in every year group, a waiting list for each with 198 applications for Reception this year. Our premises are extremely congested still with just the **one hall** and small classrooms in terms of area square metres.

The one way systems and signage in place support social distancing where there is room to do so, and sufficient front facing desks can fit into the classrooms, just about, for 15 children. It will simply not be possible to follow this particular guideline from the Government when all our classes are full.

Our **first week** of phased return for two days in half class sized bubbles of 15 will be crucial to support the **wellbeing** of the children, particularly those who have not attended since the lockdown, and to **coach** them in all health, safety and hygiene procedures. These will need strict adherence the following week beginning the 14th September when there will be 30 children per class for five days.

Inclusion, Vulnerability and Health and Safety

Our inclusive ethos enables us to support children of widely disparate needs and a significant number with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (**SEND**.) These include

children with Social Emotional Mental Health (**SEMH**) issues who can present with very challenging, high tariff behaviours and who may have an Educational Health Care Plan (**EHCP**.) The management of such behaviours depend upon the skills of colleagues in providing a consistent, trigger-free environment, using de-escalation Team Teach strategies and **Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI)** when necessary. This is for the safety of the child, other children and colleagues but it is a **significantly contributing factor to the anxieties** of colleagues and children as we contemplate our return for September.

The continuing need for **adults to still socially distance**, therefore, still presents Westerton with some huge challenges. Children who are deemed to be vulnerable, and eligible to be prioritised due to their EHCP, **may still present an unacceptable risk** to others through their behaviours, especially if hygiene is compromised.

Such ongoing risks must be **continually evaluated** through an Individual Pupil Risk Assessment (**IPRA**) which may conclude the child must remain at home, if there are no Child Protection concerns and it is safe to do so. Our Designated Safeguarding Designates (**DSLs**), Special Educational Needs Coordinators (**SENCOs**) and wellbeing **Therapeutic Teams** continue to discuss the IPRA's for individual children with parents and carers as necessary. Regular remote support will continue for carers and children who may remain in or have to return to their home. We are informed by the Local Authority that when IPRA's conclude a child must stay at home in this circumstance, this would not be categorised as a Fixed Term Exclusion but rather a Health and Safety necessity.

Routines, Rotas and Hygiene

Through consistent communication, we have become increasingly aware of the different levels of anxieties of all members of our community. The phased return to our premises so far was thoroughly researched and planned to ensure we could provide the detail required for reassurance. However, we do accept that this still did not enable everyone to return. Therefore, we now acknowledge the routines, rotas and cleaning schedule conveyed previously need to continue to support the return of all our children and adults.

The strict hygiene protocols will remain in place with vigilant deep cleaning to support the detail of the phased September 2020 Reopening Plan. The staggered Timetable for start times, breaks, lunches and end times will continue to be crucial as the integrity of each expanded bubble of 30 children remains intact.

Our thanks go again to the SLMT and colleagues for their extensive work, creating and implementing the plans. Our gratitude also goes to all the parents and children who have fully cooperated to date to ensure our success. We are optimistic this will continue across our whole academy community as we return for the Autumn Term

Stephanie Makin

Principal

15/7/2020