

Tuesday, 25th August 2020 | 6 Muharram 1442

As-salām ‘alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu

Dear Parents,

We hope and pray that this newsletter reaches you in strong *imān* and good health.

The Apex Trust, SLT and staff have been working hard to plan and prepare for the return of all our pupils to school this September *in-shā’-Allāh*.

In response to the latest government guidance, and after a lot of internal deliberation, we have come up with the following plan.

- We are opening our school for **all** pupils as planned from **Tuesday, 1st September 2020** (usual timings 8:00am doors open - 3:00) *in-shā’-Allāh*. Attendance is **mandatory** (as per government guidelines) and additional **safety measures** (see below) have been put in place to ensure a safer environment. However, we will resume the normal timetable (including PE) but won't offer any additional clubs for the first term.
- We will assess the situation daily and may be forced to close the school on *short notice* and resort to our (pre-holiday) **distance learning systems** in case of a local lockdown or if we deem necessary otherwise.
- A **hybrid model** of teaching online with pupils attending school (supervised) or/and live streaming the lesson from Apex may be necessary if either our teachers or pupils are forced to quarantine themselves in line with government guidelines.

With all scenarios, we ask you to remain flexible and work with us patiently in order to overcome this unprecedented situation. Please rest assured that we have your children's interest at the top of our priority list.

Risk Assessment & Safety procedures

The following **10-POINT-PLAN** has been produced by Apex and is in line with the latest local and national legislation as well as some extra measure specific to our setting.

1. **Do not send in your child if they display symptoms of Covid-19 or are generally unwell.** Although **attendance is mandatory**, pupils are **not** allowed to attend the school if either they, or members of their household show any symptoms of Covid-19. The main symptoms (as per government guidance attached) are:

- *a new continuous cough*
- *a high temperature*
- *a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)*

Please contact the NHS (119) and also inform us immediately if such a case arises - may Allāh *ta'ālā* protect us. We will liaise with NHS Test and Trace to discuss appropriate steps and also put a distance learning plan in place to follow the relevant lessons from home. Pupils who show symptoms during the school hours will be isolated in our school offices and parents **must** pick them up immediately. We have invested in special thermometers, PPE equipment for admin staff and other kits for such cases.

2. **Families returning from holiday from a non-exempt country must quarantine for at least 14 days before sending their children to school. Please inform us via email if this is the case with your children.** You can find more information regarding ***How to self-isolate when you travel to the UK*** on <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-when-you-travel-to-the-uk/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-when-you-travel-to-the-uk>
3. **Cleaning in school** - enhanced cleaning in and around the school, using special anti-Covid-19 detergents where possible, has been arranged. We have also booked a deep clean for all our carpet areas. In addition, our staff and lunchtime supervisors have been advised to increase the use of anti-bacterial sprays and other cleaning measures as well as appropriately ventilate rooms throughout the day. These special routines will continue as long as we deem necessary.
4. **Wash your hands!** Special hand sanitizers have been put in place at all entrances, every classroom and the hall area. Pupils will be encouraged to wash their hands thoroughly much more often than usual throughout the day.
5. **Social Distancing Measures!** In order to minimise contact and maintain social distancing wherever possible, the government is proposing pupils to remain in their "bubbles" throughout the day. All our lessons, breaks, snacks & lunch as well as the prayers will be conducted separately on a rota system. Pupils will only interact with the pupils of their own class/year group and maintain social distancing rules (forward facing classrooms policy, etc.) even within their specific "bubbles" as much as possible, however masks are **not** required.

6. **Separate Entrance & One-Way-System** - in order to maintain a reasonable consistency with social distancing, we have decided to introduce separate entrance and exit points for classes. The KS1 (Y1-3) door will be on 60 Argyle Road whilst KS2 (Y4-6) will be using the usual side entrance. EY will be dispatching from Argyle Road 62 *in-shā'-Allāh*. **We ask parents to kindly maintain social distancing during drop-off and pick-up times.** Pupils will also follow a one-way-system throughout the entire school.
7. **Minimising visitors** - in order to minimise the risk of cross contamination, we will not allow parents and visitors access to our school facilities except when absolutely necessary. Please call our offices or email us if you have any queries. We kindly ask to remain patient with our admin staff as the number of queries and other admin tasks have significantly increased during this pandemic.
8. **Curriculum, behaviour and pastoral support** - we take the wellbeing of our pupils very seriously. Teachers and staff have been advised to look out for and support pupils who may have lost loved ones and/or are showing signs of anxiety. In addition, our dedicated email smc@apexprimary.co.uk is still active.
9. **Covid-19 Awareness** - we are sure that most pupils and parents will have adopted a rich understanding of how the spread of viruses can be stopped or reduced. We will keep reminding pupils about the importance of maintaining discipline in applying all necessary measures. Furthermore, we will also have stickers and posters throughout our facilities to remind pupils of the above measures.
10. **Taqwā!** By far the most important measure in terms of prevention is the teaching of Islamic values such as *tawakul* (completely trust in Allāh) and that nothing can harm nor benefit us except by the will of the Almighty. We must take precautionary measures (such as the above) but also raise awareness of the mental and spiritual dimensions that may affect and hinder the spread of this virus. **We urge all our pupils and parents to keep fit, maintain a healthy diet, stay mentally strong and - above everything else - increase their *du'ās* and general worship.** These values are deeply rooted in our vision and curriculum.

Further information in regards to the opening of schools in general and the official government guidelines for parents and carers can be found on their website: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm_source=18%20August%202020%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19

Please be advised that we will carry on our risk assessment on a daily basis. Further measures may be taken if necessary. Welcome letters with further information on teaching & learning as well as workshops will be sent soon *in-shā'-Allāh*.

We ask Allāh to safeguard the *ummah* and free us from this pandemic *عَاجِلًا ، غَيْرَ آجِلٍ*.

Bārak Allāhu fikum