



Westerton Primary Academy

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Trust



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2nd October 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Colleagues

COVID 19 Update

We do feel blessed to have reached the end of our fourth week of term without having to collapse any 'bubbles' in school. Sadly, this has not been the case for all colleagues in schools across the Morley area though collaboration between our schools/academies and their leaders is strengthening all the time. This is at least one good thing to come from the pandemic.

Although our **Attendance** has now dropped to 96.4% and is below our academy target of 97%, we do feel this still shows a strong commitment from the community to follow the government guidance and prioritise education at this time. We do want to thank those parents, children and staff for taking prompt action to obtain a test if they have developed symptoms. This has undoubtedly helped to keep everybody safe, informed and alleviate anxieties. In promoting strong attendance, our Therapeutic/Attendance Team are considering reasons for absence very carefully at this time before making contact to offer support and guidance next week.

We would like to thank all parents and children for supporting our Catering Team and Administrative Team in promoting the take-up of Universal Free School Meals this week. This has undoubtedly helped the academy to secure crucial further funding.

The weather is changing and, in typical British style, it is very unpredictable. Please do ensure your child has a **named outdoor coat** to wear at school during playtimes, even if the sun is glowing first thing in the morning. Our staggered timetable does mean the children have very specific times when each year group needs to be active outdoors. The weather cannot be guaranteed but the opportunity can be if they are suitably clothed. Please do help your child to **avoid bringing bags** into the school building, unless this is pre-arranged with a member of staff for special circumstances. Children are still required to arrive wearing their **PE/Games kits** on the days that these lessons are timetabled. Any changes to timetabling or requirements will be conveyed to parents via **year group messages on Tapestry or SeeSaw**.

You will recall that our Re-opening Plan prioritised the need to support the **wellbeing** of children as they returned to the classroom. We feel this approach has been entirely justified and actually pays dividends in helping to re-establish **learning behaviours, resilience and desired attitudes**. Stepping back into a classroom, with diverse needs beyond their own can be very challenging for children who have had the length of time in social isolation caused by the pandemic. Showing courtesy, kindness, respect and tolerance for other faiths, beliefs, cultures, appearance or diverse special needs is so crucial to developing understanding. We know this development is in the hands of all the adults in the life of a child. We do ask that parents support the academy in any way they can by helping to exemplify our ethos **beyond the school gates**. For example, the support of a parent to correct the child who makes a racist comment, even inadvertently, can help ensure it does not happen again. Actively modelling understanding and respect for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, within and beyond our academy community helps to shape attitudes positively. Disappointingly, a vulnerable member of our wider community was exposed to the intolerant insulting behaviour of adults and children, quite recently and close to our

academy premises at collection time. I am optimistic that we can work together to prevent a recurrence of this behaviour so that Westerton can be welcoming, as it should be, for all.

We have been granted the Music Mark Award for 2020-2021 again this year which is in “recognition of our commitment to providing a high quality music education for all children and young people”. This is wonderful news and thank you to all the staff who are involved to make this happen.

We do thank you all for your support and commitment in helping us at this time. Please do have a restful, safe weekend as we look forward to week five.

Yours faithfully

Stephanie Makin
Principal and the Westerton Team