



DEDWORTH MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that this reaches you and your families safe and well.

Although I am writing to you with some details about the return to school in September, I want to begin by saying a huge thank you for all of your support this year, particularly since March. Back then, there was a lot of speculation that schools might close for two weeks ahead of the Easter holidays before returning for the summer term. As we now know, this was very optimistic. The situation that we have found ourselves in since then is literally without precedent. The response of our community has been magnificent. We can all be very proud of our young people - their resilience, creativity and adaptability have been remarkable. Similarly, you as parents and carers have been brilliant in your home schooling efforts and in supporting the mental health and well-being of the children. I must also pay tribute to the staff at Dedworth Middle School who have been inspirational since the lockdown began. More than ever, their care and compassion for the children has shone through.

The announcement that all pupils can return to school in September is great news. Since opening more widely at the beginning of June, we have been hugely impressed and reassured by the way in which the pupils have returned. Routines have been slightly different to 'normal' but the children have very quickly settled into them and have really enjoyed being back in school.

Returning to school in September

The first day of term for children in year 5 will be Thursday 3 September.
The first day of term for children in year 6 will be Friday 4 September.
The first day of term for children in years 7 and 8 will be Monday 7 September.

The arrival time is dependent on the first letter of your child's surname. All year groups will come in via the side gate. Staff will be available to welcome children back to school and guide them to their classroom.

Staggered start and end times

In order to minimise the contact between individuals we are going to use staggered start and end times to the school day, for all children. This will be done in alphabetical order using the child's surname. This is for the safety of everyone and to limit the number of people on site at any one time, helping to reduce the risk of transmission. We have organised this in conjunction with Dedworth Green First School. It is important to stick to the times below for the safety of our school communities. Pupils will not be able to arrive in school before these times and will need to go straight to their classroom upon arrival.

Alphabetical Surname	Start Time	Finish Time
A-G	8.30	14.45
H-M	8.40	14.55
N-S	8.50	15.05
T-Z	9.00	15.15

School Uniform

From the beginning of the new school term, we are expecting full school uniform to be worn. The latest guidance from the government is clear that uniform does not need to be washed more frequently or any differently than it normally would be. We will not be using changing rooms for P.E. when we first come back to school so will be asking the children to come into school in their P.E. kits on the days that they have P.E. Pupils will be given their timetable on the day they return to school and will not need to wear or bring their PE kit on their first day.

School Lunches

As would normally be the case, you will be able to send your child into school with a packed lunch. The school canteen will be able to provide 'grab bags' in the first half term but these will be delivered to the children's classroom. All lunches will be eaten either in the classroom or the designated outdoor space.

Equipment

We need to minimise the amount of equipment that is being regularly being brought to school from home or vice versa. Pupils need to bring their stationery to school at the beginning of the year. This will be kept in school. Pupils will not be able to share equipment with each other.

Breakfast and after school clubs

These will not be running from the very beginning of term but we will endeavour to open them as soon as we are confident that we can do so safely.

Reception

For the safety of everyone, the main school reception will not be open as it would normally be for parents to drop into. It is not a big enough space for social distancing so it is important that you only come into school if you have a pre-arranged appointment. The main office email address is monitored throughout the day so please email office@dedworthmiddle.co.uk with any queries that you have. Alternatively, you can telephone the main school office on 01753 860561.

Illness

In the case that your child has any of the symptoms of Coronavirus, it is vitally important that they do not attend school. This is also the case if anyone in the household has symptoms of Coronavirus. If any child in school becomes unwell and is displaying the symptoms of Coronavirus, we will have to send them home as soon as possible. We have a designated room where they will need to wait to be picked up. The member of staff that is looking after them will be wearing PPE.

Bubbles and Zones

In order to reduce the amount of contacts that pupils have in school, we will be operating year group bubbles. This will enable us to offer a broad and balanced curriculum while ensuring that pupils from different year groups do not have extended contact with one another in school. There will be less movement between classrooms and around the school than normal. To maintain each

bubble, we are going to stagger break and lunch time and allocate each year group a particular area of the school to use during these times. Similarly, each year group has an area of the school where all of their lessons will be at the start of the year. We will be using seating plans and asking the children to sit in the same seat.

Hygiene

Enhanced hygiene and cleaning are key measures that will help to prevent the spread of Coronavirus. We will be asking pupils to wash their hands with soap and water at key points throughout each day and will also have hand sanitiser in each classroom. The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach will continue to be very important too so we will be reinforcing this approach with all of the children in September. Each year group has been allocated a specific toilet area that will only be used by pupils in that year. We will be cleaning toilet areas and other high touch points much more frequently than normally.

I hope that you will forgive the length of this letter. I have tried to reduce much more detailed guidance and documentation so that you have the key points that you need at this point. We have a very detailed plan for how we will open in September and will communicate aspects of this in more detail in due course. I want to emphasise that Dedworth Middle School will be the same caring and nurturing environment and that the entire team here remain committed to providing the very best for your children. One of the things that children love about coming to school is the familiarity and I want to emphasise that there will be far more things that are familiar than will be different when we return in September.

Many thanks again for all your support this year. Have a restful and peaceful summer holiday.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AT', written in a cursive style.

Andy Titheridge
Headteacher