



'LEARNING FOR LIFE'

4th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you have had an enjoyable summer and have had time to rest, relax and spend quality time with family. Our staffing team and myself are very excited and looking forward to seeing all our children return to school in September. It has been a long time since the whole school have been together and we have missed everyone.

The last few months have been extremely challenging time for everyone and we hope that your family have remained safe and well. I would like to thank you for your continued support throughout this extremely difficult time which has been a challenging and emotional time for all our school community. However, our ethos based on Values education has continued to be embraced and shines through our school community.

There has been a lot of work carried out throughout the summer in preparation for the safe return of all children to our Academy. The Dfe guidance has continued to be updated over the past few months with the latest guidance published on 28th August 2020. I hope that you will find this document useful to help answer questions you may have about what the educational provision for your child will look like in the coming weeks. We will continue to communicate updates and alterations as and when the Department of Education publish them.

Current Dfe guidance for parents can be found here:

<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>

Thank you for all you have done to support your child with their home learning throughout the summer term. We appreciate the difficulties and pressure that many parents have been under with juggling other family commitments as well as working. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the support given to our staff and myself over this challenging period; it is greatly appreciated.

The new term starts on **Monday 7th September 2020 for children in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4** and we look forward to welcoming your child/children back into school. Children starting **Reception** and **Nursery** at Sundon Lower will join us in groups as follows:

- **Monday 7th September 2020.** Our current Nursery children will start Reception from 9.00am to 3.05pm.
- **Tuesday 8th September 2020 'Stay and Play' sessions for the new Reception children.** Your child is invited to attend this session. This is an exciting opportunity for your child to meet your child's teacher and see their classroom from 9.30am to 11.30am. Originally, we hoped to be able to offer this to parents and children but unfortunately we cannot have parents into school. We will meet your child at the school gate and walk them to Early Years with teaching staff and then bring them out for you after the session ends. Please keep to your timings to help us with this transition event.
- **Wednesday 9th September 2020.** Our group of new Reception children will start school from 9.00 am to 3.05pm.
- **Monday 14th September 2020.** New Nursery children will start school from 9.05am to 3.00pm

All pupils are expected back in school in September and attendance is mandatory. The usual attendance procedures and policy are in place. We appreciate that some children and parents may be reluctant or anxious about returning and we have put support in place to address this.



'LEARNING FOR LIFE'

The latest guidance (280820) clarifies 'Attendance expectations'

In March, when coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic was increasing, we made clear no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school.

Now the circumstances have changed, it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise, as far as possible, the longer term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual school attendance will apply, including:

- *Parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age*
- *Schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence*
- *The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities 'code of conduct'*

Please be assured that the safety, health and well being of your child and all our community continues to be at the forefront of all our decision making and preparations and we will continue to follow Dfe guidance over the coming months. A comprehensive risk assessment has been undertaken and control measures put in place to reduce risk in school. These comprehensive risk assessments and planning documents have been developed following principles and guidance set out by the Dfe and Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC). The fundamental principles underpinning our planning includes safety; the emotional wellbeing of staff and children and follows DfE guidance. Our Board of Trustees and staff are kept updated regarding reopening plans and the Board of Trustees have approved our full risk assessment for a full reopening in September.

We look forward to welcoming children back to school from 7th September. **Please read through the attached letter 'Information for September reopening for ALL pupils' which clarifies all the information and answers many questions that you may have about school provision for your child.**

Stay safe and very best wishes

Mrs C White
Head Teacher