

PROPELLER ACADEMY TRUST  
Fitzwaryn

*'Through learning to learn, pupils will access society'*

Headteacher:  
MRS. S CONEBOY B.Ed.(Hons.)

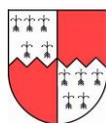
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Dear Parents/Carers

I hope that you are all well.

As you may know, the government guidance was published last Thursday for the September return of all pupils to school. You will find the details for special schools by clicking on the link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings>

Apologies for the length of this letter but I feel it is important to let you know some of our plans in more detail - there are still some aspects that need to be ironed out, but I wanted to give you the headlines as soon as I could.

I have considered the guidance carefully along with my Senior Leadership Team and taken lots of different factors into consideration before making any decisions.

**At the beginning of Autumn Term 1 (September) all pupils will be returning to their Pre-Lockdown Classes (i.e. the class that they left in March) where they will be supported by familiar staff.**

My staff and I will then work towards a transition for some pupils into new classes after the October Half Term holiday where they will stay for the rest of the academic year. The Year 11 pupils who are due to transition to the Student Centre in September will spend a shorter period with their original class and start in their new class earlier than after half term.

There are various reasons for choosing this model; the main one being the children's mental health and well-being. Some pupils are yet to return to school and some of those that have been in this term are being taught out of their normal classrooms and routines (although I have to say they have managed remarkably well!). Children who are anxious about returning to school can be supported by familiar staff when they return; the staff know your child well and can use their expertise to settle the class groups back into school. As parents, you already know the staff who were involved with your child and therefore new relationships do not have to be built straight away.

Any transition, whether experienced as a child or as an adult can be a cause for increased anxiety and I want to mitigate unnecessary stress by retuning the school to a



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familiar scenario. My staff are skilled at ensuring smooth transitions and will work with you and your child to ensure any class moves during the next academic year are sufficiently supported.

### **Some questions that you may wish to ask include:**

#### **Does my child have to return to school?**

The government has been very clear that all children and young people in all year groups and setting types should return to full time school from September and we are here to support you to do that.

#### **I am happy with the part time place that my child receives now, please can I continue with this arrangement?**

My aim is to get everyone back to school full time. However, you may choose to continue with a part time place for a short period of time only. I am happy to discuss options with you.

#### **My child has been out of school since March, is it possible for them to have a phased return to school?**

We recognise that returning to school after being at home for so long may cause undue stress on a child and on their family. If you would like to request a phased return for your child, please fill in the details below and someone will be in contact to discuss this option with you. From recent experience, we know that one size does not fit all, and we want to remain as flexible as we can to ensure that all pupils return.

#### **My child will still be shielding, how will that work with their schooling?**

There are a minority of pupils who will still be shielding in September. If your child will be one of them, please let me know and we can arrange for home education to continue. You will need to provide your child's shielding letter.

#### **Will regular handwashing and good respiratory hygiene be in place at school?**

We will support all children and young people to ensure good hand hygiene routines are followed and I ask that you continue to do the same at home. It is advised that everyone cleans their hands more than normal with soap and water or hand sanitiser. We will continue to ensure we have plenty of stocks of these items in school. Some children and young people will need to wash their hands more frequently than others.

We also adopt the 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' approach and again we will support children and young people to maintain good respiratory hygiene.

#### **How are 'bubbles' organised at Fitzwaryn?**

To minimise the number of contacts that a pupil has during the day as far as is practically possible, all of the pupils will be in a class 'bubble' – 'bubbles' are made up of individual class groups and there may be more than one class that make up one 'bubble'.

We will continue to endeavour to limit the number of staff who are working across 'bubbles', however, if we are faced with staff shortages that compromise the safety of the children, we may have to move staff across the school.

Large gatherings of children will be avoided until later in the year if allowed, e.g. assemblies and Friday joint PE lessons for Upper and Senior School.

#### **How about choir?**

We are being advised against any face to face choir activity for now. I am sure that Mrs Gordon and her team will find a way of continuing our virtual choir and keep Fitzwaryn singing!

#### **How will lunchtimes be managed?**

We are planning for all children to eat their lunch in their classrooms including those who have a hot lunch. Lunches will be delivered into the classrooms to avoid any unnecessary

movement around school. Lunchtime clubs will be suspended for now, again to avoid any larger groups of children gathering during the school day.

### **What will the curriculum look like?**

The restorative curriculum that we have in place currently is working very well; this will continue to be a focus during the first few weeks of the Autumn term. We are planning on resuming our original curriculum model in due course. Due to some of the restrictions imposed on us, we will be unable to deliver some lessons until further notice; subjects that will be affected are swimming and cooking. Sadly, we will also not be taking the children on any trips or out into the community for the first term at least. I have also had to make the difficult decision that the school will not be taking part in the Shakespeare for Schools festival this year which I know will be disappointing for some of you and your children.

I am awaiting confirmation to see if children can still access RDA and hydrotherapy. You may be concerned about your child not moving 'up' a class and therefore not receiving the right level of work to match their needs. At Fitzwaryn, we always have a differentiated curriculum model in place that meets the needs of all our learners; the teaching staff will assess your child when they return to school in September and will plan for the right level of work to be delivered despite which class they are in. If your child is then moving class, assessment information will be part of the transition process.

Your child's class teacher will be sending a timetable near to the start of Term 1 with more specific details.

### **Are there any new children joining the school?**

I am delighted to say that we have several new children joining the school in September. Although we have not been able to organise transition visits for these children this term, each of the children will have an individual transition plan for Term 1.

### **How about transport for my child?**

I am waiting for confirmation from transport regarding their arrangements for September, of course you may want to transport your child to school. To aid our car park planning, please let us know if you are intending to do this by filling in the slip at the bottom of the letter.

### **What can my child bring into school?**

We are going to limit the children to bringing only essential items in from home; a book bag containing the home/school book and a reading book only, a small bag of essentials for children who need changing - please do not fill it with unnecessary items, a lunch box – preferably one that can be wiped down, a named water bottle and a small bottle of sun protection – please administer this at home before departure.

### **The beginning and end of the day are very busy times with more people on the school site, how will this be managed?**

We have a good system in place currently that is working well; we will continue to modify our plans as we welcome more children and adults on site. If you are bringing your child in, please be aware that we are only allowing one adult to accompany them if necessary. Please do not gather in groups outside the school. Communication with staff should be kept to a minimum at these times.

### **Is there a Risk Assessment in place?**

The guidelines state that 'it is not possible to ensure a totally risk-free environment'. However, a robust Risk Assessment is in place and we will continue to regularly review it as time goes on and as new guidelines are published.

### **How about social distancing in school?**

The guidelines state for settings to 'minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible'.

Therefore, we will continue to endeavour to follow rules around social distancing. However, as I have outlined previously, I cannot guarantee this to be possible 100% of the time in the school environment.

There may be some changes in classroom layouts to facilitate an increased distance between children and staff. However, due to the individual needs of some of our pupils, it is essential that staff work in close proximity, ensuring they are appropriately supported – where possible this will be side by side.

#### **Do staff have to wear PPE?**

We have been advised that education staff in schools do not have to wear PPE routinely. For intimate care purposes, an appropriate level of PPE is worn. National Health staff are being advised by their own regulatory body.

#### **How often is the school cleaned?**

For those of you who are familiar with our school, it is a very well maintained, clean environment. In addition to the daily contract cleaners in school, we have cleaning schedules in place for more frequently touched areas and resources, these arrangements will continue long into the future.

#### **How is personal hygiene managed?**

We have allocated toilets to classes and this system will continue into the Autumn term. For intimate care, staff will wear PPE as appropriate.

#### **Will my child be supported by the therapy and nursing teams?**

I am consulting with the therapists to work out the best way for them to be on site again, taking into consideration the advice they are receiving from their management teams.

#### **What about Education and Health Care Plan meetings?**

I am delighted to say that we have continued with and completed all ECHP meetings throughout the 'lockdown' period. We will continue to carry out these meetings remotely for now.

#### **How about Parent Teacher Meetings?**

Our first meeting of the year is in November, a decision will be made nearer the time as to whether they will go ahead in person or via the telephone.

#### **What should I do if my child is ill (not COVID related)?**

Normally, we would expect a child in school if they were a little 'under the weather', with a slight cold or a headache for instance. However, due to the situation, I will not be allowing a child who is showing even slight symptoms of being unwell to be on the school site. Please do not send your child in to school if they are ill.

#### **What if a member of my household falls ill or encounters someone who has tested positive for COVID 19?**

In these scenarios, you will be asked to follow the government guidelines:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works#people-who-develop-symptoms-of-coronavirus>

#### **What if there is an outbreak or a suspected case in school?**

Once we are aware of an outbreak, or a suspected case of COVID 19 we will contact the health protection team who will carry out a risk assessment based on our individual situation and they will advise us of our next steps.

#### **What if there is a second spike or a local lockdown?**

Again, we will be advised of our next steps by the health protection team and we will react swiftly based on the information we are given.

### Will the Fitzwaryn Facebook page continue?

Judging from your overwhelmingly positive feedback about the page, I have no intention of ceasing the page as children return to school. Many of you have been able to network with other parents and families and this can only be a positive to hang on to!

If applicable, please send the details below back to school using the office email: [office.7027@fitzwaryn.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.7027@fitzwaryn.oxon.sch.uk)

Name of Child:	
I have a specific question that I would like to ask.	Question:
My child will still be shielding and I would like to continue with home education (you will be asked to provide an up to date shielding letter specific to your child)	Y/N
I would like to request a phased return for my child in September.	Y/N
My child is currently accessing school part time and I would like the arrangement to continue for a short while into the Autumn term.	Y/N
I would like to transport my child to school instead of using the allocated SEN transport provider.	Y/N
My child is anxious about returning to school and I would like some advice about what to do.	Y/N

I will be sending out an end of term newsletter next week and you will also receive your child's end of year report.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to raise any queries that you may have; thank you for your continued support of the school.

Best wishes

Stephanie Coneboy  
Headteacher