

# Meadowside School

Wirral Education Authority



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Head Teacher: Miss P. Wareing

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have been trying to work out what the changes recently outlined by the Prime Minister mean for Meadowside School. We are looking forward to having our pupils in school, enjoying learning and the company of their peers. It is clear however, that we must go step by step and above all, ensure that we are keeping everyone safe. We have reviewed the government guidance, to help you understand what it says and how this will affect pupils.

## Current Position:

Since March, Meadowside has remained open to the children of eligible key workers and some, deemed as the most vulnerable.

## Moving Forward

Mainstream schools are being asked to prepare for pupils to begin a return to school, at some point after 1<sup>st</sup> June.

## Special Schools

Special Schools have been asked to work towards looking at increasing pupil numbers after they have risk assessed that any increase in pupil and staff numbers can be safely catered for. Schools will be limited by how many small groups they can accommodate in suitable spaces in schools.

## Prioritising Pupils

As a special school with small rooms, corridors and current roofing works preventing us from using the rear playground and corridor, pool or to operate a one-way system, we will only be able to accommodate small groups dependent on need, determined by risk management.

School will also be limited by the numbers of staff available. Staff who are shielding will not be able to return to school at this point and have been instructed that they must remain working at home.

## Learning Environment

As pupils must be in small groups, they may well not be with their own class teacher or all their friends or in their own classroom. As far as possible, they will need to remain with the same group and the same adult while they are in school. Breaks must be taken in the same small groups, staggered so that the children do not mix. As a result, the timetable, playtimes and lunchtimes will need to be different than usual. Social distancing must be observed and this will reduce the number of pupils that can be in school.

Meadowside's standards of cleaning are high, however we will need to carry out additional stringent cleaning every day. Additional time for cleaning will have to be factored into any arrangements that school makes for the return of more pupils, therefore the school day may be shorter.



We're working  
towards Artsmark  
Awarded by Arts  
Council England

We are instructed that all classroom items and resources that cannot be easily cleaned must be put away. Activities must be limited to things that can be cleaned regularly. In our setting this will change the classroom environment and the timetable structure that children are familiar with, eg: there would **NOT** be any off-site visits, nor communal dining, whole group cooking or beanbags - used for a change of position. Children will not be able to use specialist rooms or shared facilities. Staff involved in intimate care, in contact with bodily fluids, support hands on with children and young people will have to wear full PPE – which again may increase anxieties in both staff and children.

Key Points: So what could this mean for our parents?

- Children of key workers and those most vulnerable must continue to be accommodated first. We will then be able to see how many additional pupils we can care for dependent on spaces and staffing available. This may mean that not all pupils in all years may be able to attend at once. We are looking carefully at this considering what provision we can safely offer. It will not be the same for all schools on Wirral – it cannot be as it will depend on the accommodation and staffing available in individual schools.
- To maximise the number of pupils attending school, we may offer places on a part-time basis or for a certain number of sessions per week, although this could mean more parents having to bring and pick up children at staggered times during the school day providing an inconsistent experience for the pupils.
- School will be different for pupils returning. There will be new systems and routines introduced that will be unfamiliar and more formal than usual which may significantly impact on those with social communication difficulties. They will of course, be well cared for and supported by the adults who are working with them.
- LA transport is running at full capacity due to the rules of social distancing. Transport staff have now been advised to wear PPE which may alarm some pupils. Parents may have to transport their own child.

When the time comes for more pupils to return, our school will do everything we can to follow the guidance issued by PHE and the DfE to keep everyone safe and parents will need to help too:

- ✓ You may be given allotted staggered times to arrive at school and to collect your child so we can try to safely manage this and ensure 2m distancing between adults is maintained.
- ✓ Parents must not gather on the school site or at the school gates when arriving or departing– staff will escort your child to you and hand him/her over at the gate.
- ✓ Only one adult can accompany children to school – siblings must not accompany them.
- ✓ Families must continue to observe the current social distancing guidance out of school, so must **NOT** be mixing with other households, going to shops, meeting groups of friends
- ✓ Pupils must wear clean clothes each day to school and wash their hands regularly especially on arrival and before departure. A spare set of clothes is required in school.
- ✓ Prepare your child to cope with the anxieties that all these changes may have on their behaviour and to help them manage their expectations
- ✓ Reinforce with your child that risk taking behaviours may jeopardise their place
- ✓ If your child is poorly or shows any sign of COVID-19 you must be contactable to collect him/her, they must not attend school for at least 7 days, only returning if they have not had any symptoms for 48hrs. A timely call to school to advise us of their return will be necessary so we can plan groups and staffing.
- ✓ If your child tests positive then the rest of the family must remain in isolation at home for 14 days.

If you feel the time is not right for your child to return, that is your choice. There is no compulsory education at the moment, and parents will not be penalised in any way for choosing to keep their children at home for a little longer.

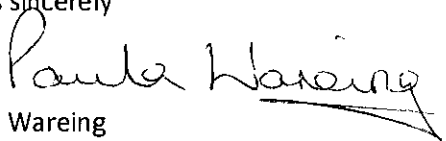
### Forward thinking

Further advice will be given by the Local Authority, Public Health England and the Department of Education and when we are able to share further information with you, we will do. We can only try to prioritise pupils and gradually increase numbers in school. This will be informed by science and the ultimate principal of health and safety for all. Later this month the government are to announce whether their 5 criteria have been met before Meadowside will

consider increasing the numbers in school. We will approach the return to school safely through well informed risk management. Childcare for Key Workers and those who need it will continue, despite any other decisions.

We want to welcome your children and young people back, as soon as possible, but we are all in unusual and new times. Welcoming them back safely must be our priority and we know you would want this too.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula Wareing". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Paula Wareing  
Head Teacher

A&E Plea

Public Health England is concerned that children and young people are leaving it to the last minute before attending A&E for other conditions and injuries. Please attend A&E if you are at all concerned that your child is ill.