



**VICTORIA**  
Primary Academy

Dear Parents/Carers,

I write to you as England goes into its second national lockdown since March to thank you for all of your support during the past 8 months, and to provide you with important updates re: your child's attendance at school until further notice.

### Revised School Opening:

Effective from Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2020, I will be closing Victoria Primary Academy after lunchtime for all pupils from FS2 (Reception) to Year 6. FS1 (Nursery) will remain open for those parents who wish to continue to use the Friday afternoon provision, although I understand that parents of Nursery pupils with siblings in school may not choose to do so. We will contact FS1 parents next week to ask your preference.

Revised afternoon collection times for pupils are:

	FS1	FS2	Y1	Y2		Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Monday	3.00-3.15		2.45-3.00			3.00-3.15		3.05-3.20	
Tuesday	3.00-3.15		2.45-3.00			3.00-3.15		3.05-3.20	
Wednesday	3.00-3.15		2.45-3.00			3.00-3.15		3.05-3.20	
Thursday	3.00-3.15		2.45-3.00			3.00-3.15		3.05-3.20	
Friday	3.00-3.15		12.15-12.30			12.30-12.45		12.35-12.50	

**It is worth noting that our revised opening time of 8.30am for all pupils has increased the number of hours of education available to all pupils each day. This means that pupils continue to access 25 hours of education each week, despite the revised closing time on Friday afternoon.**

I appreciate that this decision may present challenges to some parents who have limited childcare options available to them at present. I have taken this difficult decision due to:

- the Government's decision to place England into a further lockdown for four weeks signalling the start of the second wave
- a rising number of Coronavirus cases in the Leeds community and our designation as a Tier 3 area (extremely high risk) prior to entering lockdown
- a reduced workforce due to requiring staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable to work from home effective from Thursday (the start of the second lockdown)
- increasing difficulties maintaining staff attendance at work due to the need for staff to self-isolate according to government guidelines, in line with the rest of the UK population

This Friday afternoon closure will allow all teaching staff to take their Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time during this timeframe, and also allow all other staff to assist in the preparation for the teaching week ahead. The result for your child is their increased safety, as their class teaching team will be consistent each week, with no need to use staff other than their class teacher and teaching assistant between Monday morning and Friday afternoon. Minimising mobility of staff and pupils within school is very important to us whilst infection rates are so high, as we do not want to move staff between bubbles and thus increase the risk of exposure to infection between staff and pupils. I believe that this model gives us our best chance of maintaining full opening as we move into the second wave,

nationally. Whilst I understand that this change to the working week presents a challenge to parents, I hope that you understand and support our decision making.

### **Revised Lunchtime arrangements:**

As a further measure to enhance bubble arrangements and reduce the risk of infection between bubbles, from next week we will also be asking Year 2 and all KS2 children (years 3-6) to eat their lunch in their classrooms, so that they will only be mixing with pupils in other classes outdoors on entry to /exit from school, and also on the playground. We have already switched to disposable food packaging and cutlery, so this lends itself to classroom service and has proved very popular this week, as we have trialled it in Year 5 and 6.

### **Revised PE timetable:**

We are also revising the PE timetable next week, again to minimise the number of adults in direct contact with your children and to increase opportunities for the cleaning of equipment between bubble usage. Pupils in Y5/6 will enjoy 30 minutes of PE daily.

Monday	4MC	4GG	Y5/6
Tuesday	1CW	1JR	Y5/6
Wednesday	YRKH	YRJR	Y5/6
Thursday	2AB	2HG	Y5/6
Friday	3GL	3LP	FS1 (am/pm)

### **Revised School Uniform:**

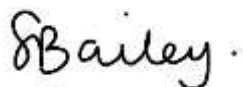
Finally, as the winter months are now upon us, it is important for us all to understand that the measures we are required to take in school are going to impact on the temperature in school through to the Spring. We are required to keep the school well ventilated by opening windows in all classroom and shared spaces - and we know that this is going to get very cold! As a result, I am relaxing school uniform requirements so that pupils are able to wear a warm fleece/hoodie in addition to their school jumper/cardigan, and am also welcome to parents preferences to allow their child to wear warm joggers rather than tailored trousers/skirts. This is effective from Monday.

All of these measures are being put in place at this stage to tighten even further our already robust risk assessment measures which have been in place since September.

It is my focus to keep our school safe, happy and well throughout this second wave. I take this responsibility very seriously and assure you all that I am taking every decision with careful consideration for the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff.

Once again – thank you to all parents for your ongoing support. This is very much reciprocated – if you need us, please call in, pick up the phone or email us and just ask us for help. We will do everything we can to help you all through to the other side of this pandemic.

With my very best wishes,



Sam Bailey  
Executive Principal