



St Leonard's C.E. Primary School

"Nurturing Faith and Inspiring Success"

Southwark Diocesan
Board of Education
Multi-Academy Trust



Mitcham Lane, Streatham, SW16 6NP
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Headteacher: Mr Simon Jackson BAQTS (Hons) NPQH
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs Laura Akhtar BA(Hons) PGCE

25th February 2021

School Organisation from 8th - 31st March

Dear Parent / Carer,

Following this week's government announcement, I'm delighted to confirm that **St Leonard's will be open to all pupils from Monday 8th March**. This term has been highly challenging for everyone within our community and the staff team are eager to welcome everyone back.

A Clarification

Listening to the Prime Minister's statement, one could have understood that schools may be returning to complete normality from 8th March. This is not the case. **Most restrictions that were in place in the autumn term will remain and all classes will be subject to closure at short notice if a positive case of coronavirus is identified within a class.** Mrs Akhtar will separately inform you of specific arrangements regarding start and end of day times and measures to assist with the social distancing of adults.

Attendance

As the key scientific indicators are currently positive, we enthusiastically support the government's position in making attendance for all pupils a priority. As such, from Monday 8th March, the school will return to its standard procedures in recording and reporting absence. Therefore, should your child be absent, you will need to contact the school office in order to provide the reason. The school will attempt to contact any parents who do not provide a reason on the first day of absence.

Breakfast & After School Childcare

I regret the government's announcement that such provision should also open from 8th March. In my view, this clearly compromises the *bubble* structure and you will remember that the very first cases at St Leonard's were traced back to our breakfast club. However, we are also mindful of the fact that the circumstances are more positive compared with October. Therefore, **we will open our breakfast club** and, in doing so, **I implore you to only use this facility if absolutely necessary.**

Regarding after school care, we have contacted *Kids' City* and await confirmation that they will also be reopening on March 8th. As soon as we have information, Mrs Akhtar will inform you. Should the facility reopen, please only use this facility as a last resort.



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Reassurance

Some of the messages coming from politicians and the national media are deeply unhelpful, particularly in relation to so-called *catch up*. The wonderful song, *Clouds* by Joni Mitchell contains these lyrics: *"Well something's lost but something's gained in living every day."*

Whilst undoubtedly children have lost out on many of the elements involved in having an excellent education, ridiculous and unsubstantiated claims are being made regarding hours of lost learning based on a whole host of assumptions. When your children return, we will be looking for all the positive ways in which they have developed and all that they have gained as well as calmly discovering the gaps that need to be filled.

The proposed national strategy is doomed to fail if it is based on the tag line of, *"Come on; catch up."* Anxiety has no place in any successful strategy for improvement and we will take a measured approach.

After Easter, we will look at every year group individually. We will look at their curriculum and consider it against how many terms or years they have left at St Leonard's. Then we will decide on how to serve the interest of our children. There will be urgency but there will not be panic, mental overload or additional hours.

Your children will be fine, not least because I'm sure that you've all done your best to support them at home and they will now be returning to the finest group of professionals that I've had the pleasure of working with.

And finally...

I'd like to confirm that I finish supporting in another school on March 31st and will be returning to St Leonard's full time at the start of the summer term. In continuing to thank Mrs Akhtar, Mrs Gavin, other senior leaders and the wider staff team for the amazing job they are doing, I want to return before the Multi Academy Trust realise that the St Leonard's team doesn't need me!

Kind regards,

Mr Simon Jackson

Head Teacher



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