

## Academy Recovery Action Plan

Returning to schools being fully open after the Covid-19 lockdown is going to be challenging.

Trying to predict what it will look like or when or how it will happen is difficult.

We must be aware that it will be a very different experience for every school and for the different people - children, staff and parents - within the school community.

We will need to be honest with, and accepting of, ourselves and each other about how difficult this experience could be.

Considerations	Action
<p><b>Staff and Pupil Well-being</b> Many school staff have continued to work in schools, including during the school holidays, though not always their own school</p> <p>All teachers have continued to work providing education and support from home whilst home schooling their own children. We must recognise these experiences, particularly where staff have continued working over the Easter holidays too.</p> <p>For teachers of young families and children or family to care for they will have had a very stressful time whilst working their full hours so may need some emotional support.</p> <p>For many adults and children, the return to school will be greeted with a huge sigh of relief.</p> <p>People will naturally want to return to how it used to be, but it will take time for us to adjust to the 'new' normal.</p> <p>All members of the academy community will need to recognise and allow for this by being kind to each other and ourselves.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through staff meetings there will be an opportunity to focus on wellbeing of staff and discuss any children of concern.</li> <li>• Expectations for staff to work beyond the school day will be minimised where at all possible – marking, planning etc.</li> <li>• Staff will be expected to spend the first few weeks back assessing the children's academic, social and emotional needs through running open activities, talking, playing and enjoying the broad curriculum such as PE, Music, Art/ DT and Project as well as basic key English and Maths skills.</li> <li>• All staff will be given time to talk with SLT regarding their own experiences at home and any support we can offer.</li> <li>• All staff will be reminded of the Employee Assistance Programme we have in place for them should they want to use it.</li> <li>• All staff and children will be reminded that we will take our time to return to 'normal' and it will be done in a holistic way. Staff meetings, assemblies and class 'circle time' will be used to support this.</li> <li>• We will acknowledge the huge historical event we have lived through and allow ourselves to blend back in to normal when all parties show they are ready. SLT and staff will review this very regularly.</li> <li>• Children's well-being will be considered at all times and this will support them to hit the ground running when they are ready and make up the lost learning relatively quickly as evidenced in other countries.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Re-establishing routines</b> For many the re-establishment of routines will be difficult.</p> <p>This will not just be for school routines; it will also be for those basic daily life routines, such as sleep and getting up.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routines will be put in place swiftly as children prefer routine and it gives them a sense of comfort.</li> <li>• Some families may struggle, and academy staff will acknowledge this and offer help where needed.</li> </ul>

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<p>We will need to allow a period of adjustment and be aware of the impact of trying to re-establish these routines for staff, parents and children.</p> <p>We will need to re-learn the rhythm of the school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children will be very tired (as will staff) by afternoon and so the timetable will need to account for this, and more open activities planned initially.</li> <li>• Children will have been eating at very odd times and may be hungrier. Breakfast and snack will be provided (and crucial).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Re-establishing expectations</b></p> <p>We are aware that different people will have had very different experiences during the lockdown. Some will have been in school throughout, though for them school will have been a very different place.</p> <p>The majority of children will have been at home and each of them will have had their own experience.</p> <p>It will take time to re-establish and re-learn the expectations of school behaviour and learning. We know that much of learning is based on practice and we will all be out of practice with this.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will re-establish behaviour expectations, how we speak to each other, how we treat each other and our attitude to being in school. The learning will happen when this is all established.</li> <li>• We will hold daily talks with the class by staff and leaders to remind them all is well, creating a safe environment, reminding them they are loved and cared for.</li> <li>• We will remind pupils of respect for each other, love for each other and what that looks like again, thus re-creating the ethos, culture and learning behaviours we had.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Differences in learning</b></p> <p>Across the community there will be a huge range in what learning children have engaged in while not in school.</p> <p>There will be children who have spent every day, including the holidays, engaged in formal learning activities and completed every piece of work set by the school.</p> <p>Equally, there will be children who have not engaged in any focused learning activity for the entire time they were not in school.</p> <p>Most children will come somewhere in between.</p> <p>We will need to respond to what children have learnt, not what we expected them to have learnt. We will need to understand what children have learnt and what they have forgotten.</p> <p>Even more, those who have been a carer for a sick relative or dealt with grief for someone they couldn't see. This learning and possible trauma is not on the curriculum but will be key to who our children are.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will be assessing learning informally; to restart children's schooling with formal testing will mitigate any focus on re-building relationships and exacerbate the anxieties about restarting formal schooling.</li> <li>• We will recognise, value and celebrate what children have learnt.</li> <li>• The teachers will spend time allowing the children to 'show and tell' what they have been doing, what they have learned and what their lives have been like over the lockdown.</li> <li>• We can then assess them academically as well as socially and emotionally.</li> <li>• We will remember that much of what children may have learnt will be very different to 'school learning' and certainly not on the curriculum.</li> <li>• We will need to take time to find out what has been done in the home environment (remembering that not all have been home schooled) for example who has learnt to bake a cake, build a wall, become an expert on the Roman Army or the life of an Amazonian dolphin.</li> <li>• Some children may feel they have missed out. We must acknowledge that this may not have been their fault that they did not manage to carry out much 'learning'.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Difference between those who have been on site and those who have not</b></p> <p>There will be significant differences for children who have and have not been on the school site during the lock down. It would be wrong to assume that those</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will ensure we use the experience of those who have attended the provision to highlight to children that it is safe in school as long as we wash our hands, keep some distance and use a tissue to sneeze or cough.</li> </ul>

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<p>who have been in school are OK. We need to remember that these are our most vulnerable families.</p> <p>They will be very comfortable with no social distancing, attending school and not worried about 'catching' something more than the children who have stayed home for weeks/months constantly being reminded they cannot go outside.</p> <p>The children will have had very different messages and experiences, but not necessarily academically different.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some children will have made new friends, whilst attending the provision, who they now have to part from. We will speak with the children and see if they want to keep contact – penpal etc.</li> <li>• These children can also model to the other children how they kept safe and still managed to have a great time playing and learning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p><b>Domestic Abuse</b> We will need to be really vigilant about children who may have experienced abuse during the lock down. There has been a significant rise in domestic abuse during the lock down. Many children may have suffered significant harm during this time. We need to be aware of this as a possibility for all our children, not just the ones we had identified as vulnerable.</p> <p><b>Online abuse</b> In addition, we need to be aware of the threats and possible abuse that children may have experienced online during this time. There are increased risks from adults and the exposure to harmful images and threats.</p> <p><b>Online bullying</b> Further, as the lock down has forced more and more of children's social lives to move online, we need to be aware of the increased risk of online peer on peer abuse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will create a safe environment for all children and allow them many regular opportunities to talk about their experiences.</li> <li>• We will ensure that children have safe spaces to talk about their experiences during the lockdown.</li> <li>• We will need to ensure that all children have access to trusted adults who will listen them and are ready and trained to respond to them effectively. This will be 1:1, small group sessions and whole class.</li> <li>• We will need to remember that it may take a long time for children to reveal any abuse.</li> <li>• They may communicate it through behaviour and other indicators, rather than through disclosure. All staff will need to be aware of this and able to respond appropriately and immediately.</li> <li>• We will not to assume poor behaviour is due to being back in school but could be the child trying to communicate a frustration.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bereavement</b> It is essential that we are clear with children if anyone has died and who has not returned to our setting for some other reason- house moves, job changes, parents deciding to continue with home education, etc. Even for those who have not experienced a death in their family or community, any illness will become a greater source of anxiety as the link between illness and death will have been reinforced in a way that was not common experience in twenty first century Britain.</p> <p>This will lead to more anxiety and may make many children (and adults) more risk adverse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a school family we will be transparent about any changes that have occurred. This can be within class setting where necessary or during assembly.</li> <li>• We may have had some children move to other schools over the period and we will want to share with the children how we wish them luck and can send a card to the child if they wish, allowing them to say goodbye.</li> <li>• The school will take time to look at how many people recovered from the illness due to the skills and care of the NHS, the money that was raised to support them, the encouragement given by the nation (clapping) and find a way to let them know how thankful we are. The children can come up with a way to share the message to NHS but also the great success of this number to the community and be a voice of celebration.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Sensory needs</b> Many children will be looking forward to the return to school but will find being around people difficult, frightening and overwhelming, particularly if we move rapidly from social distancing to a return to school.</p> <p>We will need to be aware of this and support it. For some children this will be exacerbated by a fear of people in general. Having experienced weeks/months, of social distancing, children will have received an implicit message that other people are dangerous.</p> <p>Further, their experience of other people, beyond their immediate family, within their personal space will have been limited. For many the hustle and bustle, movement and number of people in school will be difficult. We need to be aware that many will express their sensory issues and anxieties about the proximity of others physically.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will be aware of any sensory issues being highlighted and it is imperative that there is control in walking, gathering etc.</li> <li>• We will create calm and orderly conditions and ensure there is a quiet space available.</li> <li>• Many children will be used to quiet now and alone time and may crave it. Staff will use rooms and hall for separating children out, creating small calm group work.</li> <li>• Many children have not been in a room with more than a few people for some time and life may have been very quiet, so the classroom will seem very noisy.</li> <li>• Staff must ensure the level of noise is kept low where possible, but where it is not then always reminding children where the quiet spaces are.</li> <li>• All staff to be vigilant, looking for signs of stress.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Separation anxieties</b> The majority of children will have become use to being with their parents and immediate family for an extended period. Even for those who are excited to regain their freedom and see their friends, this is a potential source of anxiety. There will be children who struggle with this separation and experience anxiety while they are in school, particularly where their family includes key workers or those going back to work in crowded spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many children separate from their families easily every day, but in normal circumstances, some do not.</li> <li>• However, now there may be many more who do not want to leave their family, because they feel/believe that:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They can keep their family safe if they are with them</li> <li>• They can see that the family are ok if they stay home</li> <li>• They will miss them</li> <li>• They don't want to be surrounded by lots of people</li> <li>• They don't want the stress of formal learning again</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Staff will constantly reassure the children that the family are safe, all working, shopping etc. just as we would when a child shows these anxieties in normal situations.</li> <li>• Staff can call parents midday to check in and reassure the child they have spoken to family and all is well.</li> <li>• For children particularly distressed we can arrange for children/parents/carers to talk in the middle of the day during this transition period.</li> <li>• Children will initially be allowed to bring in photographs of their family and/or a familiar cuddly toy if they so wish.</li> <li>• Older children will be provided with time to 'check-up' on their younger siblings in school.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Special Educational Needs</b> The impact of all these issues will be even greater for those with special needs. Their learning will have been impacted as will issues of being or not being in school, managing change, routines and anxieties. There will be particular issues with managing transitions into school and where there is a change of setting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will establish expectations of behaviour, establish routine again and reassure pupils that all is ok.</li> <li>• Individual pupils with complex needs will have Risk Assessments/Behaviour Support Plans reviewed/put in place as required.</li> <li>• The class will need a visual timetable every morning to reassure the children how the day will look.</li> <li>• We will use positive reinforcement as many children will have forgotten how to behave (shouting out, talking over each other, poor language).</li> <li>• Staff will be patient as children will not remember how to behave immediately and may take a couple of weeks to get those good habits back. Patience will be a virtue.</li> <li>• If necessary, staff will create a reward chart with the behaviours we do want to see and at the end of the day discuss with the child how they think they did. The chart should be seen at all times.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transitions</b> <b>June/July return</b> If we are to return in the Summer term it will allow us to carry out more 'normal' transitions and prepare the children for the next part of their education. This is likely to be more extended key worker provision at this time and preparation for September for more formal opening of schools and education</p> <p><b>September return</b> If we are not back until September for education, there will be particular issues with children who are transitioning from one school to another.</p> <p>Year 6 Normally, we spend much of the second half of the summer term preparing children for their moves from primary to secondary etc. But potentially there will be many children who have left a school without a chance to say 'goodbye'.</p> <p>Year R Children will not have had their transition visit and have no idea what to expect except they will know that children were not allowed in school due to sickness. This may cause more anxiety than previously.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June/July – this time will be spent focusing on wellbeing, safeguarding, routines, reassuring children and transition.</li> </ul> <p>It will be essential to mark this transition.</p> <p><b>Options for Year 6 could be:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite children back to have closure, say goodbye and mark the transition.</li> <li>• This should include any staff who are leaving and children making transitions at non-standard times.</li> <li>• We will work with the Secondary schools to facilitate transition arrangements.</li> <li>• We could hold a leavers assembly in September to make time to say goodbye.</li> </ul> <p><b>Year R</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow them to have transition (visit) days over the first few weeks and hold parent meetings as though it was July.</li> <li>• This will also give parents time to buy all the necessary items such as uniforms and bookbags etc.</li> <li>• Transition meetings with nursery/pre-school to be held in July online where possible.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Uniform</b> Most children will have grown over the time that they have been out of school and so their uniform may not fit. Particularly if we go back to school on short notice, many parents will struggle to get new uniform for their children.</p> <p>This may be exacerbated by financial issues faced by parents without work and issues related to production, import and sale of non-essential goods. So, we will need to consider relaxation of their uniform codes.</p> <p>Children will need to be welcomed back into school, not penalised for not having the right uniform.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will welcome all children back, with or without uniform! This message will be shared with parents.</li> <li>• If the return is in June/July then the wearing of uniform may not be expected until September.</li> <li>• Where parents are struggling to purchase uniform, we will allow them time (2 weeks initially) to get the correct uniform or we will provide them with second- hand uniform where we can.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support for staff</b> As school communities we will need to support our staff, including those who have experienced loss and trauma.</p> <p>Some will have been in school without a real break throughout the crisis, while others may have been working exclusively from home.</p> <p>Others will not have been working at all.</p> <p>We need to allow ourselves time to rebuild and reform our school communities.</p> <p>We need to consider particularly the stress some leaders may have faced and their need for support. Many have made difficult decisions and had to respond to a barrage of government guidance which often has been less than clear.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data will be based on PiXLs/teacher assessment at Easter and children will need to be assessed carefully over the Autumn term.</li> <li>• Many children will not have moved forward in their learning and therefore it may take weeks/months to recover.</li> <li>• The Trust must accept there will be some 'feeling our way' based on what we know about how children learn, how we know our families and from DfE/Safeguarding/ Educational psychologist advice.</li> <li>• The return to school will undoubtedly offer the DSL and DDSLs many new disclosures to deal with, stressed and emotional parents and this will take a lot of time as well as cause emotional upset for the staff. Supervision will be offered to all DSL/DDSLS by the Principal and the Trust.</li> <li>• Staff will be given the Employee Assistant Programme information reminded of the service available to them.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Relationships</b> Re-building relationships will be key.</p> <p>We need to be aware that this will not happen overnight. We need to give ourselves time and be kind.</p> <p>We will also need to address that many children have just spent weeks/months in only the company of their parents/carers and will struggle to separate for a while. They have not played with friends or had to compromise. This may cause tension as friends play games with rules.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will ensure all playing is supervised and scaffolded, at every opportunity reminding children how we play together, compromise, share and work together just as we did before.</li> <li>• We will take time to remind the children how we do things at school, helping them to regain that identity and the culture and ethos that comes with it.</li> <li>• Rewards will be used all the time to positively promote the characteristics we seek to see.</li> <li>• Some children will have reverted back to more immature behaviours, and staff will be patient with this and remind the children how we speak at school without reprimand.</li> </ul>

**There will, of course, be practical considerations to returning to academy life in whatever form this takes e.g. staffing ratios, social distancing etc.**

**Academy Leaders will ensure that Government guidelines are adhered to.**