

**Dartmoor**  
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST



# Nurture, Inspire, Achieve

A small school, learning together in the local community

26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear parents/ carers

## Return to school, 8<sup>th</sup> March

Following the government's announcement on Monday, we are pleased to tell you that ALL pupils will be returning to school from the 8<sup>th</sup> March. From this date, will see all pupils return to face-to-face education in schools and colleges. The reopening of education settings to all, is being prioritised due to the significant impact caused by being out of school to the mental and physical health and wellbeing of children and young people. The explanation for opening schools fully is based on the following:

- There are overwhelming advantages for children being in school, from an education and life path point of view.
- The risk to children is low from going to school and catching Covid-19. The risk is not zero but it is so much smaller.
- Given the huge benefits, the evidence is strongly in favour of children going to school.
- The Health Minister commented that there are several things which take the risk in schools down even further, referencing the increased system of controls and Covid-19 testing of education staff and secondary-aged pupils.

I'm sure you will be relieved to have positive conversations with your child(ren) about returning to school on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Whilst most parents are probably very happy that children will get back to education and social interaction, there may be anxieties about the transmission of Covid-19. To reassure you, all staff who come into school are having twice weekly Lateral Flow Testing for coronavirus, which they undertake at home. Alongside testing, we will continue with our stringent measures to remain Covid-safe in school with regular handwashing and distancing where possible. Our updated risk assessment for a full school opening will be shared on our website soon.

We will be able to facilitate Breakfast Club from this date also – please **book your sessions on School Gateway as usual**. Many thanks.

## Wellbeing and mental health

As we prepare for the return of all pupils on 8<sup>th</sup> March, supporting and prioritising mental health and wellbeing will be more important than ever. We will look to establish wellbeing by rebalancing learning and positive experiences for our children through social interaction and play. Being back in school with their friends and teachers will be an ideal environment for promoting good emotional wellbeing and identifying early behaviour changes and signs of possible distress. The social and emotional skills, knowledge and behaviours that children learn in the classroom can help them to build resilience and set the pattern for how they will manage their mental health throughout their lives.

Wellbeing is a clear indicator of academic success and we will be building resilience and promoting healthy eating, exercise and provide a safe, consistent environment in which our children can thrive.

There are some useful resources on the following sites for parents:

**Anna Freud:** top tips to help families work together and support one another during the coronavirus outbreak - [option-3-covid-advice-families2.pdf \(annafreud.org\)](#)

**Young Minds:** resource for parents whose children are anxious about going back to school - [Parents Guide To Support - School anxiety and refusal \(youngminds.org.uk\)](#)

[MindEd For Families](#)

### **Remote Learning**

Remote Learning will continue until Friday 5th March via Class Dojo. Following this, provision will be back in class for all pupils. It has just been amazing to see all the home learning coming in during the lockdown and how you have helped your child(ren) to stay engaged and motivated throughout. Our recent parent survey showed overwhelmingly positive feedback so thank you. I must also thank our extremely hard-working teachers and teaching assistants for their amazing efforts both face to face in school and on providing work remotely. Their hard work is a testament to the vision and values we have in school to Nurture, Inspire and Achieve.

### **Looking ahead**

**Online survey for parents with pupils with SEND needs** – We have been asked by [National Children's Bureau](#) (NCB) to take part in a national consultation to gain the voices and understand the experiences of children and young people with SEND (both those with and without EHCP's) during this COVID pandemic.

This is a really worthwhile and valuable consultation as it will inform DfE responses for recovery and it is vital that our children and young people with SEND are heard loud and clear so I would ask all of you to try and find the time to support this.

[NCB consultation for children and young people with SEND Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](#)

If you are a parent/ carer with a child who has a specific need, please take the time to complete the survey, by 8<sup>th</sup> March. Many thanks for your support.

As spring and better weather are on the way, we are aiming to start after school clubs after the Easter break – this is to give everyone a chance to settle back into school. We will be permitted to run after school provision outside for pupils. This will be mostly sport/ play orientated and we will let you know when clubs are available for booking on School Gateway. Many thanks for your patience.

We have seen some much needed sunshine this week but also some windy weather. Let's hope the weekend brings the spring feeling that we all need. Have a great weekend!

Kindest regards,



Mrs D Petersen













# How are you feeling today?



happy



anxious



sad



angry



excited



calm

## 6 things you can do to help you feel good

Talk to someone you trust about how you're feeling



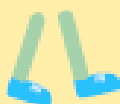
Go outside and get some fresh air



Listen to your favourite music



Keep active - run around or play games



Eat lots of healthy food



Have a good night's sleep



## Need someone to talk to?

Call Childline for free  
0800 1111



In an emergency, text SHOUT  
85258