

Friday 07 May 2021



## Update Letter

Dear Parents & Carers,

I hope you are all safe and well and enjoying the opportunity to meet with friends and family at a safe social distance.

It has been great to have had four weeks stability and the pupils and staff have been able to welcome everyone back, settle in and re-establish routines. Since returning class staff have carried out a variety of assessments with the pupils and it is wonderful to hear that the vast majority of pupils have been able to not only maintain their learning/skill levels, but actually make progress despite the odds. We only have a very small minority of pupils who have regressed, and we are working hard with them and their parents to give them the additional support they need.

The fact that pupils have been able to maintain and make progress is testament to the hard work of parents and carers and school staff who have worked tirelessly as a team to give the pupils the support they needed over the last 14 months.

We will be planning lots of fun and exciting assessment activities and tasks later this term, and this will allow us to find out if pupils have made the predicted rates of progress and achieved their end of year outcomes that were set at the beginning of this academic year.

I am so incredibly proud of all the pupils and so appreciative of all the hard work of parents and my staff team. It is amazing to reflect and think about all that has been achieved in the most challenging circumstances.

### Staffing Update

We have two staff leaving us today Mrs Faye Price, Teaching Assistant in 10R and Miss Natalie Pilkington Teaching Assistant in 8G. Mr Wright Site Supervisor has also moved on to pastures new. I am sure you will join me in wishing them well in their new posts and thank them for their service to our school.

### Future Events

We have a busy term coming up with lots of exciting events, please check the calendar events on the website. We are hoping to be able to invite you into school for the events taking place after the 21<sup>st</sup> June in line with the Government's roadmap. We appreciate some of you may be hesitant about meeting in larger groups and we will be offering an online / remote access to our events too.

### Pupil testing

We are continuing to test secondary age pupils twice per week onsite and a have small number of secondary age pupils testing at home. I am pleased to report we have had no pupils test positive.



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### **Staff Testing**

Staff are continuing to test twice weekly at home on a Wednesday and a Sunday. I am pleased to report we have had no staff test positive.

### **Staff Vaccinations**

Most of the staff team have now received the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of their Covid19 vaccine. This is a huge positive as it not only gives them the maximum protection from serious complications, but also significantly reduces the risk of transmission to others.

### **Class Closures**

One of the biggest challenges we are facing is staff absence, as you know we have operated a very strict bubble system and only in exceptional circumstances have we allowed staff to mix bubbles.

During the pandemic lots of medical appointments and non-critical medical procedures were put on hold, as the situation is changing and life is slowly returning to normal, staff members and their dependents are now being invited to attend these appointments and whilst they make every effort for these to be outside of school hours this is not always possible. Unfortunately, this is having an impact on staffing levels in school.

We have only recently started to use supply agency staff and as you can appreciate the agencies are struggling to find supply staff as the demand is high.

Since returning after the recent holiday, we have had to close three classes due to insufficient numbers of staff to operate the class safely.

At a governor's meeting last week, we discussed and agreed that we would increase our bubble sizes. We now have 6 bubbles, with a maximum of three classes in each. This along with the use of supply agency staff will go some way to ensuring we can keep classes staffed safely.

Class closures are a last resort and will only occur if we have no other option. I understand and appreciate how difficult this must be especially for working parents, but unfortunately it may happen from time to time until further relaxations come into place on the 21<sup>st</sup> June.





### **EduLink One - New Parent Information and Communication System**

We have been trialling a new parent information and communication system called EduLink One. The trial has been very successful, and we have received great feedback. The system will provide you with essential information about your child/ren and their lives at Astley Park School and will replace the Xpressions app. It will also be our system for booking Parents Evening appointments, accessing essential documents such as review paperwork and it will also enable you to update your contact information. We will be sending out further information via email very soon.

Thank you for your continued support.

Keep Safe & hopefully see you all soon 



Kieran Welsh  
Headteacher

