



Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

www.midsomernortonschoolspartnership.com

Executive Headteacher/CEO: Alun Williams

Registered Address: Norton Hill Primary School, Silver Street, Midsomer Norton, BA3 2UD

Company No: 7365778

31st August 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Firstly, I hope everyone managed to have a break of sorts over the Summer holiday period and enjoyed the return of some freedom and normality! I thought I should write to you to confirm arrangements for the return to school in September. As you may be aware, operational guidance for schools regarding COVID-19 has been reissued in August and we are now updating our risk assessments and outbreak plans. Schools will resemble the more normal routines we are all familiar with, but there are still some controls that must remain in place. These include:

- ensuring good ventilation in schools;
- ensuring social distancing where possible;
- the wearing of face coverings on public transport;
- good hand hygiene – using sanitiser regularly and washing hands thoroughly;
- the requirement to test all secondary age pupils on their return to school.

Risk assessments will remain available on school websites and your child's school will write to you with their planned testing procedures where appropriate. The mass-testing of secondary aged pupils will require testing to take place prior to the formal re-opening of schools in some cases. Staggered starts to the beginning of term may also be required in some cases, as a result of the numbers involved.

Staff and pupils under the age of 18 years and 6 months, will now no longer be required to isolate even if someone in their household tests positive for COVID-19. Staff and pupils should continue to attend school as normal in this situation. If a member of staff or pupil tests positive themselves, they should of course then isolate for the required time period (currently up to 10 days). If any staff member or pupil has any or all of the key COVID-19 symptoms (new persistent cough, high temperature or loss of sense of smell or taste), they should book a PCR test immediately. Please inform your child's school if your child develops any of the symptoms listed.

School uniform should now be worn as per the requirement of your child's school and timings of the school day will revert back to the normal pre-pandemic arrangements. Children will be able to move more freely around schools and 'bubbles' are no longer a requirement. However, some schools have decided to retain some elements of the measures put in place to protect children and staff from the spread of infection, as they found them to be a more efficient way of managing pupils in school – staggered lunchtimes for example in our larger secondary schools.

School attendance remains a mandatory requirement for all those registered at a state school. Attendance of pupils across the Trust was higher than normal in the final term of the last academic year and I hope this trend continues, so that any missed learning can be recovered quickly. I am pleased to report that examination results across the Trust schools from primary right through to A level, were very positive and this suggests that very few children have lost significant ground as a result of the two lockdown periods. However, there will be some youngsters who will have fallen behind and there will be programmes in place in schools to support these children. Secondary-aged children have fared particularly well with the Year 11 and Year 13 results at GCSE and A level being extremely high across the Trust schools. In the primary phase, Reading and Mathematics outcomes remain positive and in-line with pre-pandemic levels, but Writing competency is less strong and this will be a significant focus area this coming year.





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Finally, I would like to formally welcome Buckler's Mead Academy, Yeovil to the Midsomer Norton Schools' Partnership Trust. It was a pleasure to visit Buckler's Mead during Terms 5 and 6 last academic year and I know they are looking forward to working with the other schools in the Trust over the coming months and years.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Alun Williams
CEO

