



St. Edward's Church of England Academy

Westwood Road, Leek, ST13 8DN

Telephone: 01538 714740

Principal: Mr. T. Hutchinson

<http://stedwards.academy>

21st May 2020

Dear Pupils and Parents/Carers,

I hope I find you well.

IMPORTANT: Expanding provision guidance

We are still planning to expand provision in the Academy on 1st June but this will be to a limited number of pupils. I am very aware that Government guidance and news coverage can be very conflicting and causes questions and concerns for you as parents/carers.

As a middle school, we do not fit the Government model in terms of curriculum, systems, pupil numbers or how our premises are set out. At the current time our plan is this:

- We will expand provision on 1st June 2020.
- We will expand provision to 100 pupils in 10 groups of 10 with a minimum of one teacher per group.
- All other pupils will continue to be provided with educational resources via Go4Schools.
- Key worker and vulnerable pupils across Years 5-8 will take top priority in regard to admission.
- All parents/carers of pupils who have been allocated a place after completing the Academy survey last week will be contacted by the Academy by phone before the end of the day on Friday 22nd May.
- If you do not receive a phone call, then your child has not been allocated a place in the Academy on 1st June.
- We will continually review the situation and look to increase numbers when it is safe to do so and when guidance on social distancing and the requirements for staff and pupils who have health concerns are changed by Government.
- Detailed guidance regarding expectations for those pupils entering the Academy will be provided as soon as possible.
- For those pupils at home, further guidance on a slightly different model of home working will be provided (please see the next section of this letter).

I am aware that the uncertainty and change during the next few weeks and months is going to be very unsettling for all involved. I would request that you are patient with us as we endeavour to keep you informed about any changes.

I would reiterate at this point that the difficult decisions that have been taken regarding expanding provision in the Academy to further pupils have been built on a foundation of safeguarding and this will continue to be the basis for any future changes.

Home working for the rest of the summer half term

The expansion of provision in our Academy is an important milestone in this arduous journey which we have endured together. The opportunity for some of our pupils to come back to school before the summer recess provides the chance for them to re-engage with each other and their teachers and to return to the practise of everyday school life. Yet in returning to the Academy, pupils will face differences to their usual routines in terms of lessons, breaks, movement and, most importantly, engagement with each other.

In response to Government advice regarding expanding provision in schools, the Academy has conducted its own review and audit to consider the educational provision it can offer for those pupils who currently are at home and cannot access the Academy. This comprehensive review has considered a range of operational, logistical, pedagogical and personal considerations. It has involved a range of personnel from senior leaders, governors, staff, parents/carers and a consideration of the proposals of other schools in our area.

1. Keeping in contact with pupils

House Tutors play a vital role in supporting the academic and personal welfare of pupils. Their usual daily engagement with pupils in school offers an important contact point to touch base with how pupils are doing, personally and academically. Mindful of this, our House Tutors have already made contact and will continue to make regular contact with pupils (with parental consent) principally through phone calls in order to say hello, enquire as to how pupils are and to offer any help, advice or guidance which pupils may need. This is a great chance for those staff to step in and supplement the fantastic support which parents/carers are giving during lock down.

2. Project work

The Academy is keen to provide additional opportunities for pupils to engage in school work. The regular Go4Schools subject tasks we would term as “instructional”, forming an important part of our educational offer. In addition to continued English and Mathematics provision, we propose to extend the offer with a project which comes under the umbrella of our RESPECT values with each Faculty contributing to each project and the focus for each week. House Tutors will “check in” with pupils during their regular contact with regard to how well they are progressing through the project work and pupils will be able to submit examples of their project to their House Tutors via email either as online documents or photos of paper based activities. These projects will cover the final seven weeks of the academic year and each week will focus on a key RESPECT value and include supplementary tasks to allow pupils to reflect on each RESPECT value. A summary of the detail of this can be seen below.

Week Focus Detail

1	R	Recognise British values and the contribution these have made to our society and our world
2	E	Encourage pupil actions as global citizens and environmental advocates
3	S	Strive to understand and appreciate the diversity of our society from people of all backgrounds
4	P	Prepare for the challenges of life; a special focus here on the Olympic movement
5	E	Empathise with the plight of others with a specific focus on personal well-being and mental health
6	C	Christian – emplacing the idea of hope as a beacon of light and opportunity from a variety of religious/belief system backgrounds
7	T	Teamwork – build up a positive response to challenges and learning to overcome adversity together

The information about these projects will be provided to pupils via Go4Schools at the start of each week and pupils will have a week to complete this project work. Pupils should roughly spend 1.5 to 2 hours per day on this project, but can spend more time if they wish.

We remain hopeful that at some point before the end of the academic year our school community gets the chance to come together again in order to celebrate our pupils' achievements this year and to ensure that they are best prepared for the next phase/stage of learning. We will do all that we possibly can to get all pupils back up to speed with their learning.

Updated: Home School Games

Our local School Games Organiser has put together some physical activities that pupils can undertake each week and log their progress. This will then be reported back to us as a school and will compare us to other schools that are taking part. It would be fantastic if we could continue to set our standards really high this week and once again demonstrate our physical prowess.

Well done to all the pupils who participated in last week's tasks; it's great to see how many pupils are taking part. Last week's results:

Y5 = 3rd place

Y6 = 3rd place

Y7 = 4th place

Y8 = 1st place – well done!

The links below take you to the Home School Games competition pages for this week:

[Y5 & Y6 Home School Games – Deadline: Tuesday 26th May at 4pm](#)

[Y7 & Y8 Home School Games – Deadline: Tuesday 26th May at 4pm](#)

Pupils who have completed the activities can download certificates to celebrate their participation:

[Home School Games - Certificates](#)

Reminder: Mental Health Awareness Week 2020 is a chance for us all to focus on kindness

Mental health problems can affect anyone, at any time. Mental health is everyone's business. One thing that we have seen all over the world is that kindness is prevailing in uncertain times. Looking after ourselves has never been more significant than right now. The 'new normal' has changed the way we live and the way we work. We are missing family, friends and colleagues and we are having to adapt our daily routine. We are now using words like 'Covid-19', 'lock down' and 'social distancing' at a time when we all need comfort.

Why kindness?

We have learnt that amid the fear, there is also community, support and hope. The added benefit of helping others is that it is good for our own mental health and wellbeing. It can help reduce stress and improve our emotional wellbeing.

Kindness could transform our schools, places of work, communities and families. Let's shape a society that tips the balance in favour of good mental health, for all of us, but especially for those who are most vulnerable.

What do we mean by kindness?

Kindness is choosing to do something that helps others or yourself, motivated by genuine warm feelings. Kindness, or doing good, often means putting other people's needs before our own. It could be by giving up our seat on a bus to someone who might need it more, or offering to make a cup of tea for someone.

Evidence shows that helping others can also benefit our own mental health and wellbeing. For example, it can reduce stress as well as improve mood, self-esteem and happiness. There are so many ways to help others as part of our everyday lives. Good deeds need not take much time or cost any money.

Small changes can make a big difference.

There is support for people who are finding life a struggle. Details and phone numbers of organisations and charities who can help are below:

- **Samaritans:** Call free on 116 123 or visit the [website](#).
- **NHS 111:** Non-emergency advice is available [online](#) (only call 111 if you cannot get help online). People with hearing problems can use the [NHS 111 British Sign Language \(BSL\) service](#).
- **MIND:** Mind has tips and support on its website: [Coronavirus and your wellbeing | Mind, the mental health...](#)
- **Shout:** Confidential 24/7 crisis text support. Text "SHOUT" to 85258 or [visit Shout Crisis Text Line](#).
- **Crisis Support For Young People:** Under 35s. Call Papyrus's Hopeline UK from 9am to 10pm weekdays and 2pm to 10pm on weekends. 0800 068 41 41. Text 07786 209697 or visit the [Papyrus website](#).
- **CALM:** The Campaign Against Living Miserably. For people in the UK who are down or have hit a wall for any reason. Call 0800 58 58 58 (daily, 5pm to midnight). Free, anonymous [webchat with trained staff](#) or visit the [CALM website](#).

Reminder: Rights Respecting School

As a Rights Respecting School, we regularly reflect on different articles from the UN Convention of Rights for the Child. During the current period, the UN are releasing an 'Article of the Week' for you to examine and discuss the significance of on your lives. This week's article is Article 28: The right to education.

[Unicef: Rights Respecting Schools - Article of the Week](#)

Reminder: Phone calls from House Tutors

Please note that phone calls made by House Tutors are likely to be displayed on your phone as 'blocked number' calls. This is due to the majority of staff working remotely. For the same reason, it is not possible for House Tutors to leave a phone number for you to return their call.

If you miss a phone call from your child's House Tutor and you would like to pass a message to them, please use the 'Contact' section on the Academy website and state that your message is for the attention of your child's House Tutor: <https://www.stedwards.academy/contact>.

Reminder: Resources from Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service have now launched their new Safe+Sound programme. This is a weekly programme with partners providing workshops for children who are currently educating at home. Like the regular Safe+Sound events, the programme is aimed at KS2 children (Y5 & Y6) and will run for 12 weeks from Wednesday 6th May with new content and different partners getting involved every week.

[Information about the Safe+Sound programme](#)

[Safe+Sound Learn Live – Every Wednesday at 10am](#)

Topics include:

- Fire Safety
- First Aid
- Water Safety

- Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Road Safety
- Internet Safety

Each week will have live chat, several workshops and a quiz – all aimed at helping children to keep themselves and their families Safe+Sound in these extraordinary times. The programme will also be available to view again on demand at any time after it goes live.

Important: Staying happy

During these uncertain times, everyone at the Academy wants pupils and parents/carers to first and foremost be safe and well. That includes your mental health and wellbeing.

We are setting work on Go4Schools to enable parents/carers to provide activities and learning in whatever shape and form this may take. We understand that living rooms, bedrooms and kitchen tables are not classrooms or laboratories, although I know some of you have made conversions during the past few weeks.

Therefore, parents/carers: please do not apply more pressure to yourselves than you need to. You are doing an amazing job and everyone at the Academy applauds your efforts as honorary teachers. We know for many of you this is not a job you wanted or always feel fully equipped to carry out.

We only expect our pupils to do their best as we would when they are in school. If this means completing the work they can do, the work they enjoy then that's great. But this doesn't mean having to complete every single task set. The most important thing is staying happy, healthy and content. Learning is as much about being out in the garden, playing a game, keeping active, cooking a meal, or helping with the washing up and laundry.

The Academy is currently working on additional support and plans that will be announced soon. Once these plans are in place, we will of course be in touch with details of the next phase of the Academy strategy to support you as parents/carers and our pupils who are such essential members of our community.

Reminder: Transition

For those pupils who will be joining us in Year 5 or leaving us from Year 8 this year, we're working with high schools and first schools to make alternative arrangements where necessary. Please be assured that you will receive all the necessary documentation, guidance and activities you need in a format that you can complete at home. We are also looking to arrange alternative events when lock down restrictions change.

For the new Year 5 pupils: we can't wait to meet you all and get to know you and introduce you to our wonderful Academy community.

For our Year 8 pupils: we will be very sad to see you go. But don't worry, we won't be letting you go without a proper send off! We are working on what this is going to look like at the moment. You deserve it after all that you have contributed to our Academy over the last four years and in becoming such amazing 10:10 young people.

For Year 8 pupils who will be joining **Westwood College** in September 2020:

- Link to information from Westwood College for Y8 pupils and their parents/carers: <https://www.stedwards.academy/parents-and-carers/year-8-2020-transition-to-high-school-information>
- Transition letter from the Headteacher at Westwood College: [Westwood College Transition Letter](#)
- Pupil survey (to be completed by **Wednesday 20th May** – please contact Westwood College as soon as possible if you have not yet completed this survey): [Westwood College Pupil Survey](#)
- 'Information for Parents' section on Westwood College's website: <https://www.tltl.org.uk/parents/>
- 'Contact' section on Westwood College's website: <https://www.tltl.org.uk/contact/>

Reminder: Communication and subject queries

To assist you in contacting the correct person at the Academy when you have a query, please continue to utilise the CONTACT link on the Academy website for all general and office focused enquiries. For any subject specific questions, please utilise the following addresses to access key subject specialists:

For Maths	maths@st-edwards.staffs.sch.uk
For English	englishst@st-edwards.staffs.sch.uk
For Science and Computing	scienceandcomputing@st-edwards.staffs.sch.uk
For Geography, History and MFL	humanandlang@st-edwards.staffs.sch.uk
For RE	re-sted@st-edwards.staffs.sch.uk
For Creative Studies	creativestudies@st-edwards.staffs.sch.uk

Reminder: Mental health and wellbeing

At the current time more than ever, ensuring that we look after our personal mental health and that of those we care about is paramount. Below are a range of resources, websites and apps that you can access and that provide links to further mental health and wellbeing materials.

- <https://www.headspace.com/>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51873799>
- <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/>
- <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/supporting-your-child-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

Reminder: Safeguarding

Keeping our pupils and their families safe is our most important job.

If you have any concerns, please call First Response on 0800 131 3126 or the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 or Childline on 0800 1111. If you need to contact us, please do so via the Contacts link on the Academy website.

There is a lot of support available to help keep your child safe online. Below are some useful links to help parents and carers:

- Think You Know: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/> (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online)
- Internet Matters: <https://www.internetmatters.org/> (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- Parent Info: <https://parentinfo.org/> (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- LGfL: <https://www.lgfl.net/online-safety/> (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- Net Aware: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/> (support for parents and carers from the NSPCC)

God bless,



Mr T Hutchinson
Principal