

Headteacher:
Corina Foster



The Valley School
Broadhall Way
Stevenage
Herts SG2 9BN
Tel: 01438 747274
admin@thevalley.herts.sch.uk

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Dear Parents and Carers,

REF: WELCOMING OUR PUPILS BACK – THE VALLEY MODEL

I am sure that you feel like I do, that an effective vaccine is essential in allowing us to have a future free from the level of anxiety and upheaval that is part of our daily lives at present. However, we know that this may take a considerable amount of time and extensive trials, so we need to work together to meet the physical and mental health needs of our pupils.

Levels of anxiety across the country are at an all-time high and those who have additional needs will find it more difficult than others to manage the lack of normal routine and interactions. You know that we always put a lot of thought and effort into preparing our pupils for the start of a new school year and I want us to work together to do so this year, but the current situation requires even more creativity than normal.

The latest education guidance from the Government has been widely discussed and hotly debated in the media, but very little has been shared about Special Schools. You may be interested to see the following quotes from official guidance documents:

- "Special Schools will work towards a phased return of more children and young people without a focus on specific year groups".
- "Settings have the flexibility to make the right decision for their circumstances on how these pupils are supervised, continue to learn and are supported in school".
- "Special Schools ... should work towards welcoming back as many children ... as can be safely catered for".
- "The safety of our children and staff is our utmost priority".

I hope you will take a little time to read through the following plan that I am proposing, to allow all pupils to return to school for a limited amount of time this term, and that you will be confident that the phased return and the measures I have put



in place will minimise the risk to such an extent that you feel able to allow your son or daughter to benefit from the emotional and practical support it offers them.

May I reassure you, as you read through my proposal, that I fully understand that, as a parent or carer, you are uniquely placed to make the right decision for you and your family and I will respect your decision and I am also happy to discuss it with you to help you in making your decision. I cannot offer you a 100% certainty that these measures will keep you or your family safe, but I am hoping that the risk can be considerably reduced.

If your son or daughter needs to attend because you are a key worker or because he or she is vulnerable for another specific reason, you will be contacted by phone this week to discuss a full or part-time place. Otherwise, you will be invited to take up a place only during certain weeks between now and the end of term.

In order to plan carefully, I am asking you to respond by online survey [xxxxxx](#). If you are not able to use this method to reply, please leave your answer by telephone.

There are only 3 possible answers in the survey:

- A. My son/daughter will continue to learn from home at present
- B. My son/daughter will return to school on the specified weeks
- C. I am undecided and would like to discuss it further

Yours sincerely

Corina Foster

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Headteacher