



'Believe you can'

1st March 2021

**Re: Full return of all pupils on 8th March 2021**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Asalaamalaykum,

Thank you for supporting your children with their learning whilst the COVID-19 lockdown rules have been enforced. Further to the government's announcement last week, **all pupils are expected to return to school on Monday 8th March.**

In order to ensure a safe and smooth return for all concerned, please note the information below:

**Protective measures undertaken:**

To enable the safest possible return for our staff and pupils, we have conducted a full assessment of our systems and processes to include the twelve point Public Health system of control measures set out in the latest Government guidance, to include:

1. Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, **do not attend school**;
2. Ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances;
3. Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual;
4. Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach;
5. Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach;
6. Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible;
7. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated;
8. Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
9. Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing where available;
10. Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.

**Attendance:**

From 8th March, school attendance is once again mandatory for all pupils - except those who have been issued with a letter from the NHS to state they are clinically extremely vulnerable. This means the usual rules on school attendance apply for all pupils, including:

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends school regularly where the child is a registered pupil and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record punctuality and attendance and follow up absence;
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct for attendance.

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**Anxieties around returning to school:**

Given the circumstances, we appreciate there may be certain anxieties around the full reopening and return to school on 8th March. In light of this, please feel reassured that our systems and processes for the minimisation of infection are fully compliant and updated to reflect the latest guidance from Public Health England - including the 12 control measures referenced earlier. Our risk assessment has been updated to reflect these and has been passed to the Local Authority's Health and Safety team for added assurance - as always. The risk assessment will be uploaded to the front page of our school website by the end of this week. Upon your child's return to school, the emphasis will be on ensuring they are comfortable and settled in order to re-establish their routines for learning.

**Entry / Exit routes:**

Please ensure you are sticking to the entry / exit routes marked by blue and white signs **at all times**. We have attached a map to this letter as a reminder.

**Start / finish times:**

As mentioned previously, 30 - 40% of our pupils have siblings in school and as such, we do not consider staggered start / finish times to be a viable option as it would lead to parents having to remain on site / at the gates waiting to collect children - causing further congestion. Instead, we have allowed parents to drop their children 10 minutes earlier - from 8:30am - and we will open the school gates from 3:15pm (Mon - Thurs) and 12:15pm on Fridays.

**Public Transport:**

Only use public transport for essential purposes, which means travel to education, work, and essential appointments only. Car sharing **should not** be taking place between different households.

**Parents congregating:**

We are unable to allow parents to congregate when collecting /dropping off children. Please ensure you drop-off / collect your child(ren) promptly and vacate the premises **immediately** in order to ensure the safety of all concerned.

**Social-distancing:**

Parents are reminded to keep a distance from others **at all times** - including when dropping and collecting children. To assist with this, we will continue with the entry / exit routes that have been in place since September. In line with Public Health England guidance, you and your families **should not** mix with other households in any setting indoors or outdoors, anywhere. (This does not apply if you are in a support bubble.)

**Face coverings:**

The use of face coverings for primary-aged pupils is not recommended by Public Health England. We are therefore unable to allow pupils to wear them whilst in school. In contrast, face coverings are recommended for the use of adults in communal areas and / or when social distancing is difficult / not possible. Parents are encouraged to wear face coverings when collecting their children.

**Lateral Flow Testing in schools:**

Staff in primary schools will continue to have the opportunity to test themselves with Lateral Flow Testing Devices (LFDs) twice a week at home, as per government guidance. Primary age pupils will not be tested with LFDs. Public Health England have advised there are currently limited public health benefits attached to testing primary pupils with lateral flow devices. Primary age pupils may find the LFD testing process unpleasant and are unable to

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self-swab. Public Health England have stated they will continue to review this approach in the light of any emerging evidence.

**Additional information to note:**

- Only one parent should escort children to/from their designated entrance/exit points.
- Parents will be discouraged from congregating in groups at the gates.
- All pupils **MUST** be promptly dropped off and collected to ensure the safe management of arrival / departure times and to enable our premises staff to be available to clean / disinfect the premises.
- Pupils attending school should wear their uniform but where, due to lockdown, parents have been unable to source replacement items of uniform, consideration will be given to such circumstances.
- On their designated PE days, children should attend school wearing their PE kits - with a plain navy hoodie, black trainers and black jogging pants (instead of shorts). Children's black pumps are to be kept in school.
- Pupils will be provided with their own water bottles - which will be cleaned daily.
- Pupils must bring their book bags daily along with their iPads fully charged.
- Pupils will remain with their allocated safety bubbles (groups) throughout the day.
- Expectations relating to behaviour remain as stated in the school's behaviour policy, however in addition to this during COVID 19, should a child cause a risk to others, parents/carers will be contacted immediately.
- Should a child become ill whilst in school, parents will be contacted to collect them immediately. In the meantime, they will be cared for in the school's medical room.
- In line with Public Health England's guidance, primary-aged children must not be sent to school wearing masks as there are additional safety concerns linked to the incorrect use of masks.
- Due to social distancing requirements, our usual end of week celebrations will continue to take place in class without parents.
- Except in the case of an emergency, we will be unable to allow parents / visitors inside the school premises. Should parents need to communicate with their child's class teacher or the school office, this should be done electronically or via the phone using our established communication methods. Entry inside the school premises is by appointment only until further notice.
- For any non-urgent concerns regarding your child's learning, please communicate via Class Dojo. Your child's class teacher will aim to contact you within 48 hours.

We will continue to review our processes and provide further guidance as and when we receive it. Please remember: adherence to Public Health guidance is a collective responsibility for **all** staff, parents and pupils alike. It is **vital** that we work together and support one another to ensure the school community remains safe. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding coronavirus, please feel free to email us at: [covidconcerns@theolivetreepriamary.com](mailto:covidconcerns@theolivetreepriamary.com)

We look forward to welcoming back all of our pupils on 8th March.

Yours sincerely,  
Mr. H. Asghar



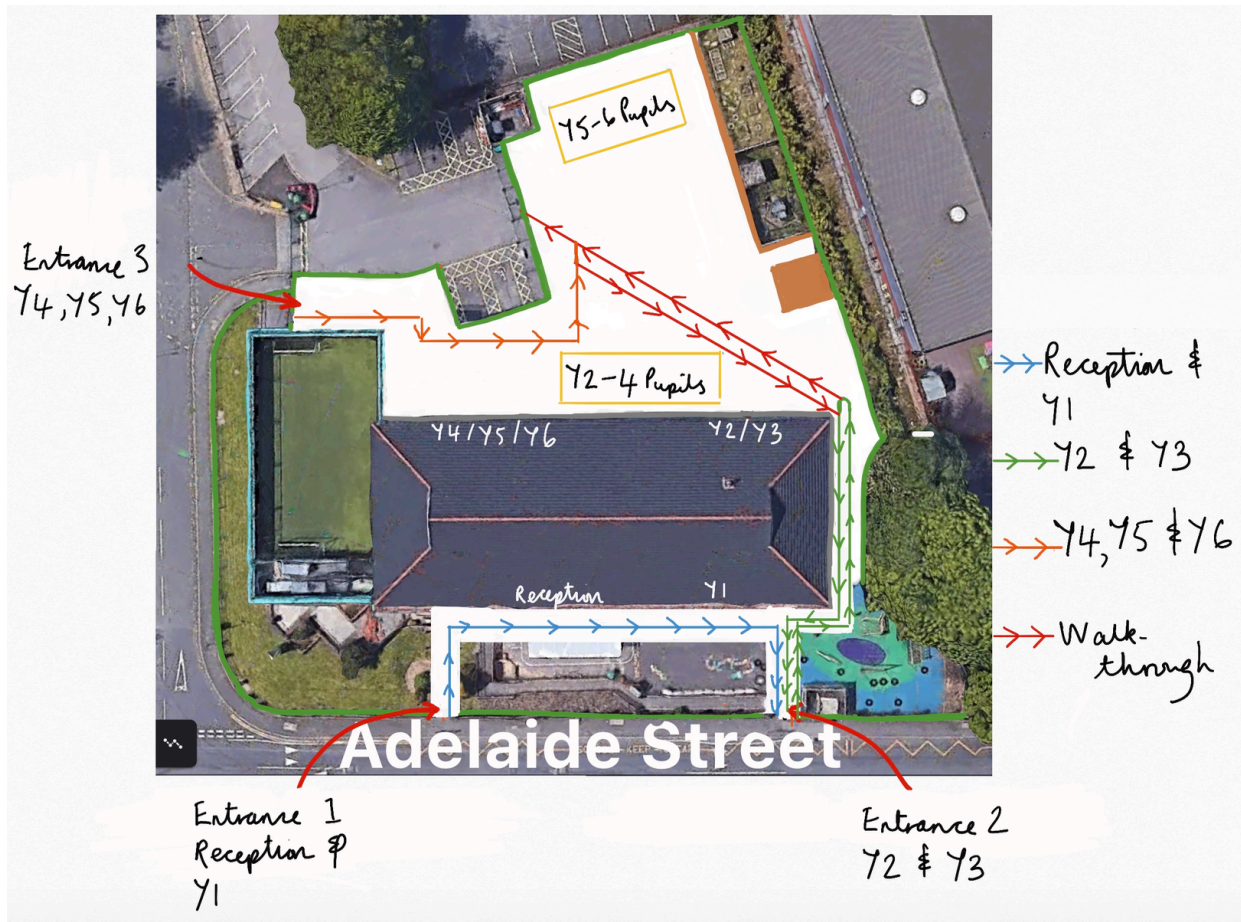
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Aerial view of The Olive Tree Primary School with entry / exit system marked



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