

Returning to school for all pupils March 8th 2021

Ilsington CE Primary School's Recovery Curriculum



Why do we need to have a recovery curriculum?

Will you be teaching Maths and English every day?

How will you ensure that my child doesn't waste time on their return to school as we mustn't lose momentum in closing any gaps in their knowledge?

All of the above, are questions which a parent might ask of their school as children return to fulltime school.

As teachers, we are all very keen to return to more formal learning and to begin assessing. We want to begin working out how to fill the gaps in learning that have been opening up for children since last March.

However, research shows that we need to take time to consider all aspects of children's development and learning. Time spent addressing the wellbeing and social, emotional, health of our pupils on their return will be time well spent. As an academy we have looked at the research carried out by Professor Barry Carpenter, into supporting children on return to school this year. Our teachers have looked at the *five levers* he describes, as we have planned how best to adapt our practice to bring the children back to school. As a result all of the schools across the Link Academy will be providing the children with a Recovery Curriculum for the first two weeks of their return to school. We believe that this is the best approach for all of our pupils.

As children who have been learning at home return to school there will be a number of adjustments to be made practically such as needing to be in school dressed and ready by 9am. At the same time there will be new social pressures caused by the split of children in and out of school and how they can process returning together and the changes to class dynamics that may have occurred. Some children will experience issues of attachment having spent months learning side by side with their parents and siblings. Children may also experience fatigue more easily having become used to a shorter school day with more freedom to take breaks. Some children who will be feeling uncomfortable about being in close contact with others, having maintained social distancing rigorously for months.

We have used the *five levers* as described by Professor Barry Carpenter to explain how we plan to support our children's transition back into fulltime education, as outlined below:

Lever 1: Relationships

Through the recent lockdown children have experienced a number of losses. Loss of routine and structure, loss of freedom and opportunities and the loss of social interaction. At the same time the children have experienced anxiety and worry as they have tried to process the realities of living in the pandemic and they will have taken on board information from the

adults and the media around them which will also have heightened their sense of worry and confusion.

As a school we need to be sensitive to these factors and to take time to address the feelings of anxiety, loss and confusion that our pupils are experiencing in their different ways. We will be focused on building positive relationships and ensuring children feel safe and secure in school.

Lever 2: Community

Our school community has been deeply involved in the children's learning throughout the recent lockdown and we need to work together with our families to ensure that they continue to feel informed and connected to the learning their children are taking part in back in school. As a school we will need the help of the children's families and carers in supporting an effective transition back into school-based learning. Whilst at the same time maintaining the new higher standard of online home learning for extended Topic projects, times tables, spellings etc. We will continue to work closely with our school community and will be thinking carefully about how we can encourage its involvement in the future.

Lever 3: Transparent Curriculum

We need to have a transparent curriculum-one which is clearly explained to children and which is adapted to their needs and about which they are consulted. We will be working to integrate the best of children's lock down experiences into learning at school.

Lever 4: Metacognition

We need a curriculum which considers the different ways in which children have been learning and to support them in their return to classrooms and help to engage them into learning in a school environment once more. We will be looking for ways to re-skill learners and to build their confidence. At the same time we as teachers need to learn from the children and to consider how we can adapt our teaching to give the children opportunity to continue to use new skills and resources learnt during lockdown.

Lever 5: Space – to be, to rediscover self, and to find their voice.

We must give the children *the space to be* -to process the changes they will experience in returning to the classroom and into friendship groups. As well as space to readjust to change of schedule and expectation. As teachers we need to give them this time and freedom to allow them time to process all the changes they will experience despite our desire to set the pace needed for change. We aim to support pupils to recognise and achieve their full potential.

<https://www.evidenceforlearning.net/recoverycurriculum/#mentalhealth>

A Recovery Curriculum: Loss and Life for our children and schools post pandemic.

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