



'Enabling every child to fulfil his/her potential in a nurturing Christian environment.'

Q&A's from CDAT & IEB Meetings to Parents – Wednesday 8th July 2020

Q: How as a small school will be still be able to take part in all local sporting events when there isn't enough pupils in a year group?

A: Small schools have the ability to give children more opportunities to participate in local competitions and we are committed to taking part in all local tournaments the same as previous years.

Q: What is CDAT's ethos for inclusion?

A: CDAT is inclusive. It has a C of E mission to meet the needs of the most vulnerable whilst recognising that everyone is individual and unique. Utkinton is very inclusive but we need to make sure we have the capacity to meet the needs of all pupils.

Q: Following on from the last question, does this mean that siblings with SEND won't get a place in the school?

A: That is not the case. They will be a sibling in the admission criteria, but we have to be honest with parents about the capacity we have to meet everyone's needs.

Q: You mentioned the possibility of the school having a Nursery/ Pre-School. What is the impact of not having that?

A: Developing a pre-school will ultimately enhance pupil numbers. At Astbury, which is a similar school to Utkinton, they had an intake of 3 in their reception class. The pre-school was setup and the reception class now have an intake of 8 for September. We find that pre-schools attract families that have siblings. Through the conversion process, Mrs Donelan will be working with the local authority and CDAT to look at a pre-school provision for Utkinton.

Q: Will class sizes increase under CDAT?

A: We have always been a small rural village school and the size of the school dictates the amount of pupils we can have on roll. Our maximum pupil admission number per year is 10. What we would like to do is have consistent and regular numbers across each year group.



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Q: I am concerned that your focus on raising standards will put undue pressure on children who have SEN needs. What will you put in place to help SEN pupils?

A: We want to be clear, the schools does have a requirement to raise standards but its priority is to ensure the provision is right for each individual child and remove any barriers that prevent every child from learning. We want to raise standards for every child and that this is proportionate to their capability and learning.

Q: What does CDAT's roadmap look like for the future of the school?

A: We want to nurture the pupils we have at Utkinton and help them achieve the standards set as well as provide stability for the school.

Q: What will September look like in terms of staffing?

A: The teachers that you have in each class will remain as it is. The IEB and CDAT understand there are budget constraints and Mrs Donelan with CDAT are committed to looking at ways to move forward with this.

Q: My concern is children have missed a considerable amount of school and you have pupils in current year 2 moving into a mixed year 3 & 4 class whose learning is at the other end of the spectrum and the diversity of their learning is a worry.

A: Every school nationally is facing these concerns in each class. Completion of home learning has been really mixed. At Utkinton we are using these weeks prior to the summer holidays to see how children are working in English and Maths and as well as looking at their emotional wellbeing. Come September, we will focus on the baseline of each child and in October, we will be invite parents in to show their current level of learning and set targets. Their progress will then be documented against these targets and reviewed in spring and summer.

Q: Based upon Baseline, if you have a high achieving child against a child who has just moved up into that class, how does that work?

A: At Utkinton, we benefit of having small class sizes and this allows teachers to really focus on the individual progress and needs of each child. We have to find a balance of finding a way of teaching each child that fits with them and their learning.



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Q: In terms of teacher training, there was a lot of teacher training days taken last year. Will there be sufficient cover and support for the next academic year?

A: Following the Ofsted inspection, the initial set up of programmes to put in place at Utkinton were teacher training heavy. There will be less of that this year as we already have the systems in place. Going forward, Utkinton does not have the capacity in its budget to bring in extra support staff so we intend to be creative with the training they attend, such as using inset days as well as attending training online.

Q: Are teaching assistant roles confirmed for September?

A: This is currently being looked at and will be confirmed in due course.

Q: What is the schools plan for September if the school is forced to close again due to COVID-19?

A: At present, we are waiting for updated guidance from the Department of Education. The IEB, Miss Pleavin and CDAT will then need to look at a Plan B. In terms of home learning, we will seek feedback from parents and pupils to find out what has worked and what we can improve on so that if we were to close, we have a home learning system in place that works well for all.

Q: Can you guarantee the acadamisation will go ahead in the autumn term and that the current format won't change?

A: There won't be any change to the planned academisation with CDAT. The decision to academise is going to the Regional Schools Commissioner panel on 23rd July. What we cannot commit to as yet is a confirmed date of conversion.

Q: What support is CDAT going to provide for future years?

A: CDAT will work with Utkinton and typically, we visit half termly. During the autumn term we look at self-evaluation and focus on the school improvement plan, focussing on areas of development. CDAT will then set targets and shape the development to meet the needs of its pupils. These targets are then challenged half termly. The targets are non-threatening but set to challenge in a professional manner. We look at capabilities and we ensure that all subject leads are given the relevant training



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and have the experience of their peers to seek support. The head teacher is then responsible to ensure every teacher knows their journey and understands measuring their accountability.

Q: How flexible is the curriculum under an academy? How does this marry and do you have to offer a minimum amount of subjects?

A: CDAT follows the National Curriculum as a minimum. We strongly believe in using the locality to engage pupils in their learning as this helps to keep learning relevant. We look at the depth of learning and by using what is local, we find children really grasp a better understanding as they know what matters to them and their learning is bespoke to them. We will constantly review the learning based upon the diversity of children that are on roll at Utkinton.

Q: Where do you see the school to be in the next few years?

A: We want to develop a pre-school and provide steady pupil numbers in each year group. Utkinton already has some great programmes in place such as Read, Write Inc, Maths No Problem and we want to really embed these in the day to day learning. We want a curriculum that prepares children for the 21st century with the necessary skills and attributes needed in life.