

13th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you are probably aware the government have indicated that school **could possibly** begin to reopen for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from the 1st June 2020.

They have issued guidance for schools and also parents:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

At the moment, there is much discussion between the government, unions and local authorities about how/when this can happen so nothing is set in stone yet.

However, in order for us to do a full risk assessment (this will be published on our website when complete) and begin to make plans to introduce children back to school, we wanted to consult with you about your feelings with regard this.

It is important that you are aware of the following. Whilst we do not have the precise details, before the school reopens to any more children than those of the key workers and vulnerable children that we are currently supporting, we will need to ensure that we will do our best to comply with the following:

PPE

The guidance states that “the majority of staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others”.

The occasions where PPE is needed are for children whose care “routinely already involved the use of PPE due to intimate care needs” (e.g. gloves for nappy changing) or if a youngster becomes unwell with coronavirus symptoms and needs “direct care until they can return home”. When supporting these pupils - face masks will be available for the supervising adult if a distance of two meters cannot be maintained, with gloves and an apron worn if contact is necessary.

Social Distancing – 2 metres distance

The guidance admits that early years and primary pupils cannot be expected to follow the social distancing rule of remaining two metres apart from each other. Therefore, schools are advised work through a “hierarchy of measures”, that are:

- avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices
- regular cleaning of settings
- minimising contact and mixing

If schools do this, alongside regular hand cleaning, hygiene and cleaning measures, then the “risk of transmission will be lowered”, Public Health England states.

“brief, transitory contact, such as passing in a corridor, is low risk”.

The school will ensure that drop off and collection will be staggered using several entrances/exits so that parents do not have to gather in a group. Parents will not be allowed into school – contact with staff will need to be via email or phone - and will be limited to areas outside the school to allow for drop off and collection.

Class Organisation

The guidance says classes should, “normally be split in half, with no more than 15 pupils per small group (if possible) and one teacher (and, if needed, a teaching assistant)”. We are aiming for less than 15 per group/classroom.

Teaching assistants may be allocated to lead a group, working under the direction of a teacher, if there are shortages.

Desks will be spaced “as far apart as possible”, however, the nature of the learning in Reception and Nursery means that children will not be sitting at tables for the majority of the time and will be in closer contact than the 2 metres (it is expected that there will be some actual physical contact between pupils and staff although we will do our best to minimise this.)

Due to the small group sizes, all the classrooms across the school will need to be utilised. All teaching staff who are able to come into school at this time (i.e. those not shielding) will be needed to work with a group so it is possible that your child will not be taught by their usual class teacher in their normal classroom. This also means that it will not be possible to continue with the current home learning arrangements as teachers will not be able to facilitate both. For years 2 -5, who will not be able to return to school initially we will provide weekly learning but will not be able to respond to emails etc. in the way we are now – if at all.

Groups will be sent home for self-isolation if there is a positive test

Pupils or teachers with symptoms will be able to get tested. Where that test is positive, guidance states “the rest of their class or group within their childcare or education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days”. This will be the class group that they are assigned to.

It is important to note, that:

“The other household members of that group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.”

If other cases are detected, Public Health England’s local health protection teams will conduct a “rapid investigation” with the potential for the whole class or year group asked to self-isolate.

Assign the same teacher/staff member to each group and class

Pupils should be in the same small groups “at all times each day”, with different groups stopped from mixing. Staff should also ensure the same teachers are assigned to each group, however, this may not always be possible due to job-share situations, staff absence or staff release time for planning and preparation. We will obviously minimise the number of adults and pupils each group have contact with. Once pupils are assigned to a group, unless there is an emergency reason, they will not be moved to another group. We will endeavour to group children according to friendship groups.

Each group will use the same classroom or area throughout the day, with a “thorough cleaning of the rooms at the end of the day”. We will seat the children at the same place (wherever possible) each day and each child will be provided with their own set of equipment. Resources around the classroom will be minimised to prevent the need for cleaning these but all equipment used will be cleaned at the end of each day or when a new group uses it. Whenever possible children will be taught outside, however, we will maintain distancing from other groups learning outside. Weather permitting the children will picnic with their group at lunchtime.

Corridors

We will maintain our walking to one side down the corridor and limit the number of children in transition at any one time. We will ensure that toilets don't become crowded by limiting the number of pupils using them at one time.

The hall and sports facilities used for lunch and exercise will be at "half capacity" or less.

Timetable

Due to staggered start times and finishing the school day may need to operate with different timings which may mean starting/finishing earlier or later – details about this will follow when we know more about the numbers of pupils we are likely to have. We may not be able to offer wrap around before 8:30 am or after 3:30pm as this would involve mixing groups up.

Attendance

We will continue to monitor attendance, however parents/carers will not be 'fined' for their child's absence. The government expects all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to attend school unless they need to shield or someone they live with needs to shield. Further guidance on this can be found below.

Guidance regarding clinically extremely vulnerable and clinically vulnerable children and members of their households

Government guidance recommends that all children in Reception, Year One and Year Six will be in school from 1st June, if it is safe to do so. However, some children will be unable to do so as they will be classed as either clinically extremely vulnerable (or a member of their household is) or clinically vulnerable.

Please read the guidance below and inform the school as soon as possible if your child will not be attending school if it reopens on 1st June because of one of the reasons listed below.

- If your child is in the **red category**, they will have had a letter from the government or their GP to confirm that they should be shielding and they should not come into school.
- If a member of their **household** is in the **red category** and has had a letter from the government or their GP to confirm that they should be shielding, they should not come into school.
- We may ask for a copy of this letter

- If your child is in the **orange category**, you may choose to send them to school.
- If your child is in the **orange category**, you may choose to keep them at home
- If a member of your household is in the **orange category**, your child should go into school.
- We may ask for a copy of a confirmation letter from your child's GP

Links for the government guidance that has been consulted is available at the bottom of this page should you wish to reference it.

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable

Pupils who'll need to **shield** and **should not** be in school include those who:

- have had a solid organ transplant – kidney, liver, pancreas, heart, or lung
- are having treatments for some cancers
- have severe long-term lung disease including cystic fibrosis and severe asthma
- have rare diseases and inborn errors of metabolism that increase their risk of infection
- are on medication that compromises their immune system and so are much more likely to get infections and become seriously unwell from them
- are pregnant with significant heart disease

If you are part of this group, the NHS will have sent you or will send you, a letter and/or a text confirming this. The letter may be sent to your parent or guardian on your behalf. If you think you are part of this group but you haven't been contacted by the NHS, you should call your GP or hospital doctor for advice.

If a child, young person or staff member lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, it is advised they only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, they are able to understand and follow those instructions.

Clinically Vulnerable

Pupils should take extra care in observing social distancing and should work from home where possible. A letter of confirmation from a GP may be required.

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):
- chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
- chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- chronic kidney disease
- chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), or cerebral palsy
- diabetes
- a weakened immune system as the result of certain conditions, treatments like chemotherapy, or medicines such as steroid tablets
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- pregnant women

If a child, young person or a member of staff lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, they can attend their education or childcare setting.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

