

16th July, 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Covid-19 – Opening Strategy for September 2020

This must be the most unusual end to a school term in living memory for us all. We are certainly going through exceptional times which are affecting us in different ways. As a Trust, we very much appreciate the protection and care that you are taking of your children at home as access to learning in school has had to be so limited over the last few months.

Preparing for a full return of pupils in September

I wanted to write to you before the end of term to reassure you that all schools in the Trust have been busy making preparations to welcome every child back to school from **Thursday 3rd September 2020**.

We continue to follow government and Public Health England guidance to ensure every possible precautionary and preventative measure is in place to maintain a safe learning environment for your child. Please visit the Trust's website <https://drbignitemat.org/> or your school's website for more detail about the measures we have put in to place and a Covid-19 Parent Guidance Document. As an employer of our own staff, we also act to fulfil our statutory obligations under health and safety legislation.

Staffing

Over the last few months, we have had very significant number of staff who have not been able to come to school for a range of personal reasons. Many have been shielding vulnerable members of their families or have been classed as vulnerable themselves. From September, we are expecting that the majority will be able to return to school and we know they are very much looking forward to being with the children again.

Confirmed Cases of Coronavirus in our School Community

Since we re-opened our schools to specific groups of children in early June, I am pleased to report that we have not had any confirmed cases of the Covid-19 virus amongst pupils or staff. However, we are definitely not complacent and have robust plans in place to work closely with local Public Health Teams and the Test and Trace System should any outbreaks occur from September.

Active and dynamic risk assessment in force

Trustees are meeting with senior leaders regularly to monitor the Trust Opening Strategy and associated risk assessments for September. All Trust schools have completed an individual risk assessment which will be reviewed again at the end of August and signed off by the Trust Chair before any children will be re-admitted. This process will enable us to respond to any local situations that may occur over the holiday period e.g. an outbreak which may require schools to delay their opening arrangements.

Online teaching and learning

Going forwards, if for any reason, children are required to stay at home again teaching and support staff have been producing work online which will be available for all children. This will enable your child to continue to learn and be motivated by age specific activities. These will be updated regularly, so please be reassured that the disruption to your child's ongoing learning will be minimised if circumstance mean children have to be at home.

Specific arrangements for September

All Trust schools will advise you about the specific arrangements for the return of your child and their individual class and teacher. Staggered start and finish times will be in place to avoid large groups of children and adults arriving at and departing from school at the same. Your school will advise you of your time slots. Please help us by making sure children arrive and are collected on time.

Finally

This continues to be a difficult time for us all and I want to thank you again for your support and patience. We are all looking forward to seeing children back at school in September and will do everything in our power to keep them safe, happy and enjoying learning alongside their friends and teachers.

Best wishes for the summer holiday period. We will see you from the 3rd September!



Rob Bowater

Trust CEO