

Safe Environment - Safe Children - Safe Workforce
Guidance for Parents and Carers
COVID-19

School Re-opening Arrangements
September 2020

July 2020

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Dear parents/carers,

Safe Environment – Safe Children and Families – Safe Workforce

By now you will know that the Government have announced that all children will return to school in September to begin the Autumn Term.

As Chief Executive of the Trust, I want to reassure you that we are continuing to work very hard in all our schools to make preparations that prioritise children's safety and learning whilst also taking into account all government and public health guidance.

We are very aware that for many of us, including our children, the last few months have been an anxious and worrying time. Therefore, we want to make sure the return to school is a calm and happy one for you and your child. In this guidance, I will give you the headlines from our Phase 2 opening plans. Your own school Headteacher will contact you as soon as possible with all the practical information you will need to know before school restarts.

WHEN WILL TRUST SCHOOLS OPEN?

The Trust Board have made the decision to open all our schools to children on Thursday **3 September** although year group starting times will be staggered. Your school will advise you exactly when your child will be welcomed back. This is to allow sufficient time for thorough preparations to be made and all health and safety risk assessments to be reviewed following the summer holiday period. By doing this we can ensure your school and staff are confident in managing and implementing the continuing changes to normal working practices required to keep everyone safe and healthy.

From Tuesday 1 September Trust schools will be open to staff in order to complete Covid-19 safety training and conduct these risk assessment reviews. All staff will receive briefings and training on the new daily routines and be given time to properly prepare their classrooms, ensuring they have all preventative resources ready for the children's return.

Trust schools will be **open full-time (Monday to Friday) from September** although staggered start and finish times will be implemented to ensure physical distancing requirements can be met at these particularly busy times of the school day.

WILL MY CHILD BE SAFE IF THEY COME BACK?

Firstly, thank you to all parents and carers for their support and feedback over the difficult last few months. This feedback has provided us with valuable information and has helped to inform our ongoing Phase 2 planning and arrangements.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming all children back to school in line with Government expectations and have worked hard to ensure all safety and precautionary measures are in place as far as is reasonably possible.

We have closely followed the new **Public Health England Endorsed System of Controls** which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

All the planning we are busy doing is focused on four overarching principles:

- The safety and welfare of pupils and staff remains the Trust's paramount principle for all planning.
- Schools will organise themselves in ways that are fully compliant with the Public Health England Endorsed System of Controls.
- Schools will have robust monitoring systems in place to ensure controls are effective.
- The Trust and its schools will make decisions that meet the needs of local communities, in line with advice from local public health teams and will act at pace as and when required.

The health and safety precautions all schools will be taking include:

- Children stay and play in their class/year groups at all times, including break/lunch times.
- Promotion of personal hygiene and physical distancing i.e. hand washing and respiratory hygiene
- Safe school entry/exit systems will continue e.g. hand washing/sanitising and shoe sanitising.
- Staggered break times, pick-up and drop-off times will continue.
- Increased cleaning and infection control systems to address the larger numbers of children in school.
- Careful management and disposal of waste.
- No external visitors to the school site unless by prior appointment with the headteacher.
- Removal of all unnecessary items from class areas e.g. displays, soft furnishings, toys that are difficult to clean.
- All children allocated their own equipment – no sharing of pencils, pens etc.
- Ensuring pupils and staff with coronavirus symptoms stay at home for the required period of time and follow government advice.
- Planning for children's learning to continue to use the outdoors as much as possible.
- Isolation rooms to be maintained for any child who may feel poorly whilst parents are able to collect them, staffed by a PPE trained member of staff.

WILL MY CHILD'S LEARNING BE BACK TO NORMAL?

As children return to school, it is important for you to be aware of the approach our schools are taking to plan learning after children have been away from school for so long. With that in mind, the following is a summary of both our approach and the thinking behind it. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's school if you have any questions or would like more information.

OUR APPROACH IN A NUTSHELL

As a Trust we will always put the wellbeing of our children at the centre of thinking. We acknowledge that children will have had different experiences during this pandemic time. However, the common thread running through, is the loss of routine, structure, friendship, opportunity and freedom. These losses can trigger a range of responses from children, so we have thought about the most effective ways to support both your child's wellbeing and learning. We hope this dual approach will support the achievement of academic expectations for your child. Throughout the Autumn Term, we want to work alongside you to ensure your child is happy, feeling safe and is excited and engaged with learning. To achieve this, we will:

1. Build strong relationships with and between children and adults in school
2. Work with our local communities to listen to what has happened, understand the needs of our communities and engage them in the transitioning of learning back into school
3. Understand that children will feel they have lost time in learning and our curriculum will be planned to address these gaps and make learning fun and comprehensive
4. Recognise that children will have been learning at home in lots of different ways. We will work with children to welcome them back into learning in a school environment and will re-introduce expectations about behaviour and effort
5. Work tirelessly to keep learning spaces safe and attractive places for children to explore and learn
6. As far as possible we will return to a full curriculum and will make use of the Government's tutoring scheme to support the most vulnerable learners

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE START AND END OF THE SCHOOL DAY?

Schools will need to continue to stagger the start and end of the school day to maintain safe physical distancing and avoid congregating groups of children and families around the school site. Your school will communicate with you shortly to advise you of specific requirements e.g. the start and finish times for your child in September. These will broadly follow the usual pattern of the school day with slots allocated for each class or year group. The following table outlines the safe entry and exit procedures that will continue to be applied across all Trust Schools and reviewed at regular intervals.

School entry procedure	
1.	All children brought to school by an adult to be brought to school by ONE adult family member, parent or carer only. If there are pre-school children at home they can accompany their parent. As a parent you will be responsible for helping your child to maintain physical distancing requirements whilst waiting to enter school.
2.	No parent/carer/family member to enter school site without the pre-arranged permission of the headteacher. School start times will be staggered and physical distancing measures similar to those used for shop entry will continue to be in place, so school drop-off is expected to take slightly longer than usual.
3.	A daily entry check will be made with the adult about any symptoms of Covid-19 in the family. If a family member is displaying symptoms, the adult will be requested to take the child home in line with government guidance.
4.	All children will walk across a disinfectant foot mat on entry to avoid transmission of virus into school on footwear.
5.	All children will wash/sanitise hands thoroughly on entry. Additional hand wash/sanitiser stations will be set up to accommodate this.
6.	Entry times to be staggered for each class/year group of children to avoid large gatherings. Your child will be escorted into the school building by their teacher or another adult.
7.	Children will not be permitted to bring bags etc. into school.
School exit procedure	
1.	School finish times will be staggered for each class/year of children to avoid any unnecessary rush or gatherings around school exit points.
2.	All children will wash/sanitise hands thoroughly before leaving school.
3.	Children will not be permitted to re-enter the school site once they have left for the day.
4.	No parent/carer/family member will be permitted to enter the school site without the pre-arranged permission of headteacher.

WHAT WILL MY CHILD BE LEARNING?

On starting back to school, the priorities for all children will be getting used to new school routines in different classes. Schools will be prioritising activities that help children to settle back into school and that support their social and emotional wellbeing as well as their learning.

We will also continue to spend more time outdoors as this is recognised as a safer environment. All children will be allocated their own set of resources which will stay in school at all times and be used by them alone.

Schools will teach an ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects from the start of the autumn term but make use of existing flexibilities to create time to cover the most important missed content. In particular, schools will consider how all subjects can contribute to the filling of gaps in core knowledge, for example through an emphasis on reading.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MY CHILD GET READY FOR SCHOOL?

Returning to school after several months may feel daunting for both you and your child. It will be important to explain to them that school will be different but that doesn't mean it won't still be fun! Your Headteacher will communicate more detailed planning with you shortly and this will help you to prepare your child fully. For now, please note the following:

School Uniform	For the Autumn term we will return to wearing school uniform. In order to avoid cross contamination of the virus it is important that clothes are washed as frequently as possible. This will help to minimise any potential spread.
School bags	We are asking that children do not bring bags, books or toys into school. All equipment will be provided and kept at school to avoid contamination between home and school.
Wearing of masks	The government guidance is clear that masks do not need to be worn by children in school. We feel that it would be very difficult to oversee the safe wearing of masks with so many children. Therefore, we ask that you do not send your child to school with a mask. If Government guidelines change we will review the situation to follow the guidance.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT LUNCHTIME?

As each of our school sites is different, arrangements for lunchtime provision will differ. However, it is likely that your child will eat lunch in their classroom to avoid large groups mixing together in the dining hall. Your school headteacher will inform you shortly about arrangements at your child's school.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF A CHILD, TEACHER OR OTHER STAFF MEMBER DISPLAYS CORONAVIRUS SYMPTOMS IN SCHOOL?

The Trust is clear that it will follow the most up-to date government and Public Health England guidance on this issue:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

For ease of reference this is set out in the following table:

Managing coronavirus symptoms in school	
1.	<p>Ensuring that pupils, staff and other adults do not come into Trust schools if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or have tested positive in the last 7 days, and ensuring anyone developing those symptoms during the school day is sent home. If anyone in school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they will be sent home and advised to follow 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection', which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 7 days and should arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.</p> <p>Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms and any pupils who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should arrange a test) or if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive (see below) or they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace.</p> <p>Everyone must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser after any contact with someone who is unwell. The area around the person with symptoms must be cleaned after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.</p>
2.	<p>Whilst a child is awaiting collection they will be moved from their group to the school's isolation room with the sensitive care of an adult. If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they will use separate toilet facilities. The facilities will be cleaned and disinfected using appropriate cleaning products before being used by anyone else.</p>
3.	<p>In the isolation room PPE will be worn by staff caring for the child.</p>
4.	<p>In an emergency, 999 will be called.</p>
5.	<p>If a member of staff has helped someone who was become unwell with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves.</p>
6.	<p>If a child is taken unwell with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, other children in the child's class do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves.</p>

7.	If a child is taken unwell with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, all children in the child's class will be removed from the learning space to allow for immediate and thorough cleaning of the space in order to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to others. The Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings will be followed.
8.	<p>All Trust schools will ensure they understand the NHS Test and Trace process and how to contact their local Public Health England health protection team. Schools will ensure that staff members and parents/carers understand that they will need to be ready and willing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • book a test if they or their child are displaying symptoms. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit • provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace • self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) <p>Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. Tests can be booked online through the NHS testing and tracing for coronavirus website, or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet.</p> <p>Schools will ask parents and staff to inform them immediately of the results of a test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. However, they could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating. • if someone tests positive, school will advise them to follow the 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection' and they must continue to self-isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste.
9.	<p>Trust schools will take swift action when they become aware that someone who has attended school has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools will contact the Trust Central Team and local health protection team. The local health protection team will also contact schools directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended the school – as identified by NHS Test and Trace. The health protection team will carry out a rapid risk

	<p>assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate. The health protection team will work with the Trust and its schools in this situation to guide them through the actions they need to take.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the advice from the health protection team, schools must send home those adults and children who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious. • Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the child or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms. If someone in a class or year group that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves within their 14-day isolation period they should follow <u>'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'</u>. <p>They should get a test, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if the test delivers a negative result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 14-day isolation period. This is because they could still develop the coronavirus (COVID-19) within the remaining days. • if the test result is positive, they should inform the school immediately, and must isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends before or after the original 14-day isolation period). Their household should self-isolate for at least 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms, following <u>'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'</u>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Schools will follow the advice of the local public health protection team who will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home. To support them in doing so, Trust schools will keep a record of pupils and staff in each class/year group, and any close contact that takes places between children and staff in different groups</p> <p>The Trust and its schools will use all template letters provided on the advice of the health protection team, to send to parents and staff if needed. Schools will not share the names or details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless essential to protect others.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>If a Trust school has two or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected, they may have an outbreak, and will work with the Trust central team and the local health protection team who will be able to advise if additional action is required.</p>

Health protection teams may recommend that a larger number of other pupils self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole school or year group.
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In consultation with the local Director of Public Health, where an outbreak in a Trust school is confirmed, a mobile testing unit may be dispatched to test others who may have been in contact with the person who has tested positive. Testing will first focus on the person's class, followed by their year group (as appropriate), then the whole school if necessary, in line with routine public health outbreak control practice.

WHAT ARE THE CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR OUTBREAKS?

Schools will ensure that remote education plans are in place for individuals or groups of self-isolating pupils. These will meet the same expectations as those for any pupils who cannot attend school at all due to coronavirus (COVID-19). In the event of a local outbreak all Trust schools will have a contingency plan for this eventuality. This may need to involve a return to remaining open only for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers and providing remote education for all other pupils.

WHAT IS REMOTE EDUCATION SUPPORT?

Where a class, group or small number of pupils need to self-isolate, or there is a local lockdown requiring pupils to remain at home, schools will prepare to offer immediate remote education. This means that schools will:

- use a curriculum sequence that allows access to high-quality online and offline resources and teaching videos and that is linked to the school's curriculum expectations
- provide access to high quality remote education resources
- select the online tools that will be consistently used across the school in order to allow interaction, assessment and feedback, and make sure staff are trained in their use
- provide printed resources, such as textbooks and workbooks, for pupils who do not have suitable online access
- set assignments so that pupils have meaningful and ambitious work each day in a number of different subjects
- plan a programme that is of equivalent length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school, ideally including daily contact with teachers
- consider how younger pupils and some pupils with SEND can access remote education by working with parents and families to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum

AND FINALLY

I am conscious that there is a large amount of information in this communication. If you have any questions, please contact your school as soon as possible and they will be able to help you. Further information is also available from the GOV.UK website by following this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

Thank you for your continued support and for everything you have done to help your child with their learning at home over the last few months. These continue to be challenging times but by working together we can ensure our children are kept safe and healthy and are able to enjoy a warm welcome back to school in September. We are very excited to see them!

Best wishes,



Rob Bowater - **Trust CEO**