

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

School Reopening Arrangements



22nd May 2020

Dear parents/carers,

Safe Environment – Safe Children and Families – Safe Workforce

You will have seen in the news that schools have been asked by the government to reopen on the 1st June for nursery, reception, year 1 and year 6 pupils initially.

There has been a lot of public debate about this. As Chief Executive of the Trust, I want to reassure you that we are working very hard in all our schools to make preparations that prioritise children's safety whilst also taking into account all government guidance.

We are very aware that for many of us, including our children, the last few weeks 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 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 REOPEN?

The Trust Board have made the decision to delay opening our schools to the specified year groups of children until **Monday 8th June**. This is to allow sufficient time for thorough preparations to be made and all health and safety risk assessments to be carried out. By doing this we can ensure your school and staff are confident in managing and implementing the significant changes to normal working practices required to keep everyone safe and healthy.

From Monday 1st June Trust schools will be open to staff and to the children of key workers and those already identified as needing to be in school. During that week, staff will receive briefings and training on the new daily routines and be given time to properly prepare their group areas, ensuring they have all their resources ready for the children's return.

For the first three weeks of opening schools will operate for 4 days a week for children. Schools will be closed on Friday to allow for staff training, review of safety arrangements and further deep cleaning. This situation will then be reviewed for the month of July 2020.

Friday 12th June 2020	School closed to children
Friday 19th June 2020	School closed to children
Friday 26th June 2020	School closed to children

WILL MY CHILD BE SAFE IF THEY COME BACK?

Firstly, thank you to all parents and carers who completed our survey to let us know whether you intend to let your child return to school. This is valuable information and has helped to inform our planning and arrangements.

There will be no pressure placed on you to send your child to school and no fines will be applied if you decide to keep your child at home. However, we would

encourage you to consider how your child may start to transition back into a school routine and I hope the following information about safety measures will help you to make your decision.

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

- To ensure the safety and welfare of pupils and staff is always the paramount concern for all planning.
- To ensure all Trust schools organise themselves in ways that are compatible with minimising the spread of the virus.

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

- Limiting pupil groups to a maximum of 15 pupils, with at least two staff members.
- Children stay and play in their allocated group at all times, including break/lunch times.
- A safe school entry system with hand washing and shoe sanitising.
- Staggered break times, pick-up and drop-off times.
- Increased cleaning and infection control systems.
- Careful management of all 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.
- 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.
- Planning for children’s learning to be outdoors as much as possible.
- Establishing an isolation room for any child who may feel poorly whilst parents are able to collect them, staffed by a PPE trained member of staff.

WHICH CHILDREN WILL BE THE FIRST TO BE BACK?

In line with government guidance we will be prioritising year group re-entry as follows:

Priority 1	Children of Key workers and those others already identified as needing to be in school.
Priority 2	Nursery and Reception pupils.
Priority 3	Year 1 pupils.
Priority 4	Year 6 pupils – where the school still has enough space to do so allowing for all safety requirements e.g. social distancing. This will vary between schools due to the constraints of school buildings and staffing capacity. However, schools will provide a minimum offer of sessions to support transition to secondary school which will be confirmed as soon as possible
Other year groups	Unless the current government guidance changes, at this point, we do not envisage a full return of all year groups by the end of the summer term. Following the current guidance, our capacity planning and risk assessments

	suggest school buildings cannot accommodate this safely. However, this is under regular review as the situation changes.
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WHAT HAPPENS AT THE START AND END OF THE SCHOOL DAY?

Schools will need to stagger the start and end of the school day to maintain safe social 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. These will broadly follow the usual pattern of the school day with slots allocated for each group. The following table outlines the safe entry and exit procedures that will be applied across all Trust Schools.

School entry procedure	
1.	All children including Y6 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 social 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 social distancing measures similar to those used for supermarket entry will 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 to walk across a disinfectant foot mat on entry to avoid transmission of virus into school on footwear.
5.	All children to wash hands thoroughly on entry. Hand wash stations will be set up to accommodate this.
6.	Entry times to be staggered for each group of children to avoid large gatherings. Your child will be escorted into the school building by their teacher or another adult from their group.
7.	Children will not be permitted to bring bags etc. into school.
School exit procedure	
1.	School finish times to be staggered for each group of children to avoid any unnecessary rush or gatherings around school exit points.
2.	All children to wash 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 groups which may be led by a different teacher. Schools will be prioritising activities that help children to settle in and will support their social and emotional wellbeing.

We will also be planning to spend more time outdoors as this is a safer environment. As we will have to minimise the use of some learning resources, we ask that you be mindful that children will not be following the full curriculum or timetable straight away.

As we are also required to prioritise re-entry of the younger children, we are planning carefully to ensure activities that are safe and enjoyable for them. We are very aware that young children will find it more difficult and will be less able to follow social distancing requirements. All children will be allocated their own set of resources which will stay in school at all times.

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

Returning to school after several weeks 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 summer term your child is not required to come to school wearing full school uniform. It is optional for you to make the decision depending on your preference. In order to avoid cross contamination of the virus it is important that clothes are washed frequently and children attend school in clean clothes every day. This will help to minimise any potential spread. By standing down uniform, we hope it will be easier for you to manage, although we would ask that clothing is suitable for indoor and outdoor activities at school.
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. As the majority of children attending school from 8 th June are the youngest, we feel that it would be very difficult to oversee the safe wearing of masks. Therefore, we ask that you do not send your child to school with a mask.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT LUNCHTIME?

As each of our school sites is different, arrangements for lunchtime provision will differ. 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 guidance on this issue <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19#symptoms>

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

Managing coronavirus symptoms in school	
1.	If anyone develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms in school they will be sent home and advised to follow the staying at home guidance . They will be asked to secure a COVID-19 Test.
2.	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.
3.	In the isolation room PPE will be worn by staff caring for the child.
4.	In an emergency, 999 will be called.
5.	If a member of staff has helped someone who was taken unwell with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms , they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves.
6.	If a child is taken unwell with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, other children in the child's group do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves.
7.	If a child is taken unwell with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, all children in the child's group 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.	If a child's test is returned POSITIVE , all children and adults in the child's group will be sent home and advised to follow the staying at home guidance .

MY CHILD HAS HEALTH CONCERNS AND SO DOES SOMEONE IN MY IMMEDIATE FAMILY. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If your child is:

- 1. Clinically extremely vulnerable**, or someone in your household is in this category they should not come back to school and should continue home learning.
- 2.** If your child is **clinically vulnerable but not clinically extremely vulnerable**, you should follow medical advice to decide if they should come back to school.
- 3.** If you have any other worries about your child's health e.g. conditions such as asthma or allergies, please check with your GP before you make your decision.

Your school will not pressurise you to send your child to school if you have concerns about their health.

CAN I CHANGE MY MIND LATER AND BRING MY CHILD TO SCHOOL?

The logistics of planning are complex as social distancing measures must be followed at all times. This requires more physical space with the result that schools cannot accommodate the return of all children. It also means that children will remain in smaller groups for some time ahead.

At this stage, if you make the decision to keep your child at home, we will be unable to guarantee that we will be able to accommodate them before September 2020 unless government guidance changes. If your child remains at home, we will continue to support you and your child with home learning. We will also keep in touch with your child at regular intervals.

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 directly during the week beginning 1st June 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 support and for everything you have done to help your child with their learning at home over the last few weeks. 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 range of learning experiences going forwards.

Best wishes,



Rob Bowater - Trust CEO