

22nd May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your families safe and well in these unprecedented times.

As you are aware, the government set out its plans for the possible reopening of schools to students from 1 June 2020 and has stated *vulnerable children of all year groups continue to be expected to attend educational provision where it is appropriate for them to do so (for children with education health and care (EHC) plans this will be informed by a risk assessment approach).*

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey, this has been really helpful in the planning of this next stage of phased re opening.

The Senior Leadership Team and I, in consultation with our Governing Body, are responsible for the safety of our staff and your children, and evaluating how it might be safe to introduce your child back to school is an incredibly important and difficult decision. We have safely been providing support for children of key workers throughout, and this has given us a high level of understanding of what is realistically achievable within the setting.

There are range of risk assessments that have been completed to support the provision for key worker children and those most vulnerable who are attending school on a regular basis. We are currently re-assessing the risk assessment to consider the implications of extending the onsite school provision to more students. School is also in the process of risk assessing each student in relation to COVID 19 guidance. In addition to this there are also individual risk assessments in place for every student's EHCP.

We believe it will not be possible for our school to bring back all the students recommended by the Government within the timescales you may be anticipating. For the safety of everyone we do not want to rush this and so, if and when students return to school, this needs to be phased and planned cautiously, with constant reviews of the systems in place to ensure we do not compromise on the health, safety and safeguarding practices that will be embedded.

In consultation with the Local Authority and other specialist provisions in the City, we have reviewed current guidelines and arrived at a draft plan which observes social distancing and safety measures to the best of our ability. This plan will obviously be subject to change as it will be continually reviewed as we put it into practice and it will also need to reflect any new guidance that will certainly be released.

Sadly, things will not be returning to the way that they were in school and it is important for families and us to start to prepare students gradually whilst still at home for a very different experience than what they are used to. We are very conscious of this and our main focus will be on the emotional health of the students as they adjust to the significant, yet necessary changes.



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Our priority will be to ensure students feel safe and happy and can manage with the changes and unusual circumstances they will find themselves in as they return to a new type of school. Supporting their mental health and well-being will be key. We will start to introduce areas of the curriculum back into their daily activities such as maths, reading, computing, writing and art. Many activities like PE, Community and Science where close contact is required will not be able to be delivered.

The attached appendix outlines our draft Re-Opening Plan. This details the changes that we will be implementing to support more students accessing on site school provision.

The parent survey has indicated that there is a significant increase in key worker families needing provision onsite as partners who have been supporting children at home return to work. These students are to be the first priority in accommodating more students on site. Therefore, from the 3rd June 2020, we will introduce a new delivery bubble into school to increase our key worker student numbers on site. This will be 12% of the school community. School will be in direct contact with key worker families initially to support their return to onsite school. Once we have established these increased numbers in school, we will review the safety of increasing student numbers on site and communicate about introducing more students on site.

We will not and cannot compromise on any aspects of safety to anyone within school. We are now therefore commencing an individual risk assessment of every student's specific needs to understand how their programme of learning and support can be altered to follow COVID 19 guidance to ensure everyone's safety.

Please see below for the link to current guidance published by the government:

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

From the survey results, we can see that there is a high level of concern from parent and carers regarding your child's return to school and we completely respect the decision each individual family makes regarding their child's attendance in school. There will be no penalty, in any way, for those families that choose to keep their children at home. We will continue to provide the home learning provision for all year groups up until the summer holiday and we are in the process of creating a quality assurance system for the virtual school to support improvements.

The school is working tirelessly in preparation. Strict operational checks; enhanced cleaning; minimal class sizes to enforce social distancing; staggered timings and breaks are but a few of the functional systems we are using to support the safety of everyone on site. To support the health of all students and staff on site, there will be strictly no entry on site if a child or staff member is unwell. School will do all we can to keep students as safe as possible but we cannot guarantee 2 metres social distancing within our school community.

Students who are considered clinically vulnerable should continue to shield and should not attend school. Medical advice should be followed.

Students who live in a household with someone who is extremely vulnerable should not attend because stringent social distancing cannot be guaranteed to be followed and there is an understanding that children may not be able to follow these instructions.

Students who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable but not extremely vulnerable can attend.



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Students must not attend if they, or a member of their household, has any of the symptoms of Covid-19 and should therefore be self-isolating.

If a child develops symptoms whilst in our care, we will adopt isolation measures and call you for immediate collection. In this instance, staff will be wearing full PPE (Personal Protection Equipment).

If a member of staff develops symptoms they will be sent home to self-isolate until they have been able to take a test confirming negative results. Members of their household should self-isolate for 14 days, although may also be eligible for testing.

Staff and students who are attending will be able to have a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus and are encouraged to get tested.

If staff or a student test negative they can return to school but only if a test has been carried out and results received. The school may ask for evidence of this. If staff or a student test positive their bubble (and the staff) will need to self-isolate for 14 days. Other members of households will not need to self-isolate unless the student or staff member they live with develop symptoms.

We appreciate this is a worrying time and many things still remain uncertain but as always, our staff will continue to try and make things as normal as possible for your child when they are in school and for them to have a positive experience. We will continue provide a range of support and education remotely for the majority of students.

Our main priority will continue to be safety for children, staff and parents, hence the need for these stringent arrangements and at present for the majority students to stay at home and continue their education remotely. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

From
Emma Sullivan
Principal
and Katie Parlett
Chair of Governors



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