

14 May 2020

Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust
Archbishop Holgate's School
Hull Road, York YO10 5ZA
T: 01904 411341
E: info@pmat.academy
W: www.pathfindermat.co.uk

Dear Parents and Carers

Reopening of schools update

As you will have seen, the Prime Minister announced plans on Sunday evening to ease some of the current lockdown measures as part of a “conditional plan” to reopen society. On Monday the government released detailed guidance on the measures schools need to put in place for the safe reopening of schools to more pupils.

We are currently looking through all of the new guidance and have already begun planning the measures we will be taking in our schools in preparation for reopening. We will share more details around these measures as work progresses over the coming weeks. In the meantime, you can read the government guidance for parents and carers below.

Government guidance for parents and carers

This guidance can also be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

Can my child return to school?

From the week commencing 1 June, we are asking:

- nurseries and other early year providers, including childminders, to begin welcoming back all children
- primary schools to welcome back children in nursery (where they have them), reception, year 1 and year 6
- secondary schools, sixth form, and further education colleges to begin some face to face support with year 10 and 12 pupils, although we do not expect these pupils to return on a full-time basis at this stage
- all schools and childcare providers to continue to offer places to the priority groups – vulnerable children and children of critical workers – they have been supporting since the end of March
- special schools, special post-16 institutions and hospital schools to work towards a phased return of more children and young people without a focus on specific year groups and informed by risk assessments
- alternative provision to welcome back children in reception, year 1 and year 6 and begin some face to face support with year 10 and 11 pupils (as they have no year 12)

This approach aims to limit numbers within schools and further education settings while ensuring that the children and young people who can benefit from attending most are able to do so.

What if my child is eligible but has siblings who are not?

We are asking that only these year groups return to childcare providers, schools and colleges from 1 June. This does not include siblings in different year groups unless those siblings are in a priority group, for example, the children of critical workers.

Our Partner Schools

How will risks to children, teachers and families be managed?

We have provided guidance and support to schools, colleges and childcare settings on [implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#) to help them to reduce the risk of transmission as more children and young people return.

To prevent the spread of coronavirus, schools and other settings will use a range of protective measures to create safer environments in which the risk of spreading the virus is substantially reduced. Whilst such changes are likely to look different in each setting, as they will depend upon individual circumstances, they are all designed to minimise risks to children, staff and their families.

Schools and other settings should communicate their plans to parents once they have had a chance to work through them in detail. Approaches we are asking schools and other settings to take include:

- carrying out a risk assessment before opening to more children and young people - the assessment should directly address risks associated with coronavirus so that sensible measures can be put in place to minimise those risks for children, young people and staff
- making sure that children and young people do not attend if they or a member of their household has symptoms of coronavirus
- promoting regular hand washing for 20 seconds with running water and soap or use of sanitiser and ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the catch it, bin it, kill it approach
- cleaning more frequently to get rid of the virus on frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, handrails, tabletops, play equipment and toys
- minimising contact through smaller classes or group sizes and altering the environment as much as possible, such as changing the layout of classrooms
- reducing mixing between groups through timetable changes, such as staggered break times or by introducing staggered drop-off and collection times

If my child is eligible, is it compulsory for them to attend school?

We strongly encourage children and young people in the eligible year groups and priority groups (such as children of critical workers) to attend, as requested by their school or college, unless they are self-isolating or there are other reasons for absence (such as shielding due to health conditions).

You should notify your child's school or college as normal if your child is unable to attend so that staff are aware and can discuss with you.

Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.

Should I keep my child at home if they have an underlying health condition or live with someone in a clinically vulnerable group?

Children and young people who are considered [extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding](#) should continue to shield and should not be expected to attend.

Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. A minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.

How should my child travel to and from their childcare, school or college?

Children, young people and parents are encouraged to walk or cycle where possible and avoid public transport at peak times. The government will shortly publish guidance on how to travel safely, which schools, parents and young people can refer to when planning their travel, particularly if public transport is required.

Home to school transport provided or organised by schools, trusts or local authorities varies widely. Schools, trusts and local authorities should work together and with relevant transport providers to put in place arrangements which fit the local circumstances, including the measures being put in place to reduce contact.

Will school meals be available for children and young people who are in school?

Schools should provide meal options for all children who are in school, and meals should be available free of charge where pupils meet the free school meal eligibility criteria. To ensure food is available for pupils who attend, educational settings are expected to reopen their kitchens if they have closed and ensure staff are able to work safely.

Useful links

Government guidance

The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy>

Actions for educational and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020

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

Opening schools and educational settings to more pupils from 1 June: guidance for parents and carers

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

Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings

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

Coronavirus outbreak FAQs: what you can and can't do (Information on schools can be found in section 6)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>

Staying safe online

Coronavirus (COVID-19) - staying safe online

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-staying-safe-online>

Thinkuknow is providing home activity packs with simple 15 minute activities you can do with your child to support their online safety at a time when they will spending more time online at home.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Support-tools/home-activity-worksheets/>

Mental health and wellbeing

NHS Every Mind Matters

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/>

Young Minds

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>

Government guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Support for families

York Financial Assistance Scheme (YFAS) - Emergency assistance is available to people who are struggling with finances due to Coronavirus.

<https://www.york.gov.uk/benefits/york-financial-assistance-scheme-yfas/1>

York Foodbank

<https://york.foodbank.org.uk/get-help/>

City of York Council COVID-19: Benefits and financial advice

<https://www.york.gov.uk/COVIDFinancialHelp>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance

Stay alert

We can all help control the virus if we all stay alert. This means you must:

- stay at home as much as possible
- work from home if you can
- limit contact with other people
- keep your distance if you go out (2 metres apart where possible)
- wash your hands regularly

Self-isolate if you or anyone in your household has symptoms.

For more information, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Please be fully assured, our main priority is the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff and this will inform all of our decision making as we implement the government's guidance to safely reopen our schools.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Daly
Executive Headteacher