

20th May 2020,

Dear Parent/Guardian/Carer,

Re: The government's proposed wider opening of schools in June.

We know you've seen in the news that schools may soon re-open to Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils. Whilst it is a very unsettling time for us all, please rest assured that we are adamant that we will not re-open our schools unless we feel it is safe to do so. The safety of our community, our pupils, their families and our staff is of paramount importance to us and, as such, we have taken the decision not to re-open on 1st June.

We have decided to take a very cautious, phased and participative approach to the challenge we face to get us all back to school successfully and safely. We have taken advice from a number of sources and are aware how this is changing daily. The North West is still suffering higher numbers of people contracting the Coronavirus than in other parts of the country and we wish to do everything we can to prevent further spread, whilst recognising our responsibilities as public servants to help get the economy back to work through opening our schools. We will do everything we can to make sure we are ready to receive these three proposed year groups, if it's safe for our school to reopen, in the coming weeks.

We are in the process of planning, but will undertake rigorous risk assessments and will not be rushed. We are in contact with the Department for Education, the Local Authority and other bodies, including staff associations to ensure we take all views into consideration and we welcome your thoughts. For this reason, whilst we are responsible for our own schools, as a Multi-Academy Trust, I attach a letter from the leader of Warrington Borough Council for your attention, so that you can see that our response is in keeping with the wider locality. There are currently two government guidance documents for parents, which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

I want to reassure you that when the time comes for us to re-open, we are not going to be pressuring anyone to send their children to school, but will keep you updated with all our preparations for making sure the school is as safe as possible, so you can make an informed decision. You will not be penalised if you decide to keep your child at home. We are creating a detailed action plan that we will share with you, before asking you if you intend to send your child to school, so that we are realistic in pupil numbers. We will keep any plan and opening dates under constant review and will contact you again once we are clearly satisfied that the schools are prepared and safe to welcome wider groups of students. There is much to consider, including: site preparation and cleaning; social-distancing protocols; pupils' health and well-being; staff availability and protection; timetabling and class-size; school meals and transport.

As you know, the half term break begins on Friday and most schools have a two-week holiday. As things stand, we are planning, therefore towards the following proposed timescale:



w/c 1 st June	CEO meetings with trustees, teacher associations and school leaders
8-10 th June	CEO and Headteachers planning/further communication with you and staff
11+12 th June	Staff training and school-based preparations
15 th June	Y6 return to school/Y10+Y12 rolling programme of face to face mentoring
22 nd June	Reception and Year 1 return to school

As stated, this may be subject to change. We have chosen a phased return model to allow the time and space to consider how our new systems are working and modify them as needed to keep children safe, before inviting more children to return.

If your child is clinically extremely vulnerable, or living with someone who is in this group, they should not come back to school and should continue home learning. 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.

School life will unfortunately need to change in the immediate term. If children do return to school, they will be in smaller classes with up to 10 -15 children depending upon the size of the allocated space. Children will be allocated to a group with others from the same year group, but may not be with all their friends. Once allocated, groups will not change to limit mixing. Children may not be with their own class teacher; some may be supervised by a teaching assistant.

We will have measures in place to encourage children to remember to keep their distance from each other, although we understand that physical distancing is difficult for young children. Sharing resources or equipment and contact will be limited. There may be changes to the start and end of the school day to stagger the timing to avoid parents congregating and to enable the 2m social distancing. Times will be confirmed with you once they are finalised. Playtimes and lunch times may also be staggered.

In the meantime, the schools remain open only for vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers. We know some employers will be encouraging you to return to work, but we're not in a position right now to extend places to other children until we receive further government guidance. If your child has to remain at home for longer, we'll continue to support you and them with home learning, and meal support for those eligible. Please do continue to stay in touch with us about how your child is getting on.

We'd like to thank you for your continuous support in helping your child learn from home. We know this has not been easy and very much appreciate all your efforts. We'll keep you updated once we know more about when schools will be able to reopen for other year groups.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or your school's Headteacher.

Yours sincerely,



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