

Friday, 29th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

COVID 19 – FURTHER GUIDANCE ISSUED TO SCHOOLS ON 11TH MAY 2020

Following Government pronouncements, and a period of meticulous planning and risk assessing we are now able to share our plans for moving forward. Transform schools will extend their opening from Thursday June 4th to warmly welcome back Year 6.

Key worker and vulnerable children are not affected by this announcement and will be welcomed back to school as normal on Monday June 1st.

Parents / Carers should be aware that these plans may be subject to change at very short notice if further Government guidance is issued. Similarly, the availability of school staffing may be affected by illness, self-isolation or family bereavement. This too may cause disruption to the delivery of these plans.

We recognise that social distancing will be difficult to maintain within a primary school. However, we have carefully considered how many children can be managed under these circumstances. Both our phased approach (Year 6 first) and our revised operating procedures reflect how we are minimising risk for everyone. School will look and feel different for returning children, but we are determined it will remain welcoming even under these circumstances.

Every child, parent and staff member has an important role to play in the coming weeks to help restore a more recognisable education offer to our children. We know we will be asking for your patience and flexibility. We will also be asking for you to respect the new school rules we are setting which are all centred on making the school as safe as possible for everyone.

Let me now outline some of the key points:



Groupings

Each child coming into school will be placed in a group of up to 15 children with 1-2 adults. A risk assessment of the school building and class sizes has highlighted that we can only fit between 5 and 15 children in each classroom area to accommodate the 2-metre social distance. Children will be grouped sensitively. In most cases, your child will not be taught by their usual teacher. Their group will be based in one classroom area, in which they will undertake all activities and will not mix with any other children within the school. Playtimes will be staggered, with groups playing in separate zones on the top and bottom playgrounds.



Drop off/pick up

Only staff and children will be allowed on to the school site. The government guidance is that only **one adult** should arrive at the school gate. Drop off and pick up for year 6 will be staggered - you will be notified of your child's drop off and pick up times next week. Please ensure that protocols are followed regarding social distancing when dropping off and collecting your child. Any

communication with the school must be by either telephone or email. Teachers will be unable to take messages at the gate and no face to face appointments are available at this time.



In order to minimise physical contact:

Classrooms have been remodelled to allow 2m distancing between desks. Markings have been placed around the school to assist with social distancing at pinch points. One-way systems (where possible) will be in place for movement around the school. The day will be arranged to ensure minimal movement during the day. Internal and external doors and windows will be kept open where possible to ensure maximum ventilation. PPE equipment will be available for staff use in certain circumstances e.g. administering first aid; caring for a child who develops virus symptoms during the day.

Infection Protection and Control

Any child with symptoms of covid-19, or living with someone who is displaying symptoms of the virus, **must not attend school**. Extra soap and hand sanitiser have been ordered in preparation for the re-opening of the school. Children will wash their hands on entry into the school and will wash their hands frequently during the day. The protocol of 'catch it, bin it, kill it' will be followed rigorously. Frequently touched surfaces around the school, e.g. door handles, taps, desks will be cleaned frequently throughout the day.



If a child does present with symptoms of Covid-19:

- they will be isolated
- parents will be contacted to come and collect them immediately
- children are eligible for Covid testing – we ask you to arrange for this immediately. A positive test would mean other children and staff in their bubble will be instructed to isolate immediately. This could also result in school closure and please be assured this will be judged on a case by case basis. The safety of everyone in the school will always come first.



Key Worker Children

We continue to provide childcare for children of families who are key workers. The key worker list published by the government remains the same. If you feel your family circumstances have changed and your employment falls into the key worker category, please email your school. The Government is advising that key worker children shall all stay together as one group in school and not mix with other groups of children in their year group. For those of you needing to use the key worker provision in school, I would like to direct you back to the Government list of critical workers who can access schools available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

It is essential the school has prior contact with all key worker families, it will not be possible to simply turn up on the day. The school will also continue to ask for references from your employer validating your key worker status.



Uniform

Children will not be expected to wear their school uniform. Children are asked to come into school wearing older and sensible clothes that are practical for all activities including sport and being outside. Please can you ensure that children wear clean clothes each day and we recommend that children's daily clothing is washed immediately upon returning home. Please send your child with a named water bottle (to go home each night for cleaning). Please do not send your child in to school with anything else, **including bags**. Lunch boxes may be brought to school if your child is having a packed lunch – each child's lunch box will remain with the child in their own bubble.



I am aware of the extraordinary efforts that you have made in educating your children at home. Transform staff will continue to prepare home learning for the children in year groups 2,3,4 and 5 and for all children who stay at home. We will also provide additional home learning activities for those children who return to school, to complete on the days that they are at home. I am extremely grateful to Transform staff, who have worked hard to keep in touch with the children in their class and to provide meaningful and manageable tasks for them to do at home, being mindful of parental work expectations and family commitments.

Please could you prepare your children for their return to school by explaining what will happen and why. This may help to alleviate some anxiety. Well-being will be the focus of much of the work we do with the children in our recovery curriculum.

Please note that although the Government advice is that children should return to school, there will be no penalties given for parents who choose to keep their children at home. We understand that this is a very difficult decision for you to make and we will respect and support you either way.

Whilst this letter outlines our intentions for extended opening, it is likely to evolve and change over coming weeks. We continue to take our instruction and guidance from the Department of Education and as we all know these are very fluid times. It is also possible over the period post-re-opening that staff could become poorly and need to self-isolate. Any model of re-opening is dependent on staff to run the provision and so at any point, this model could be subject to change either in terms of the adults working within the bubble, or indeed our ability to even have certain bubbles back in school at all. The provision for key worker and vulnerable children will remain the priority.

Thank you to you for your patience and support during this time, and I pay tribute to all Transform's staff for their continued tireless determination to work for the benefit of their school communities.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Meredith
CEO