

20 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are safe and well?

Plans for the wider reopening of STAR Multi-Academy Trust schools

Following my recent communications about the wider reopening of our schools, I am now writing to let you know our provisional plans for the year groups designated by the government in their recent announcement.

Primary Schools

How are we reopening and why?

The health and safety of staff and pupils/students is the guiding principle in every decision we make. In the first instance, therefore, we have decided to offer a **gradual, phased reopening** of our schools. We want to begin with Nursery/Reception, then Year 1 and finally Year 6. However, I want to emphasise these measures will be taken extremely cautiously, year group by year group, and only when we are confident to do so.

When will our Primary Schools reopen?

If we receive a go ahead from the government on **28 May** when certain national criteria will need to be met, our **provisional** plan is as follows:

1st June	All of our STAR MAT Primary schools will have a staff briefing and preparation day and will only be open for vulnerable children and those from key worker families.
2nd June	Reception provision opens (schools with Nurseries will make an individual risk assessment on the opening of this provision too)
15th June	Year 1 provision opens
22nd June	Year 6 provision opens

Children of key workers and vulnerable pupils will continue to be able to attend throughout this period, though please look out for communications from your child's school to check for any changes to their provision. Where possible these children will join the main cohort of children of their year group if they are in school.

Apart from children of key workers and vulnerable children, our primary school offer will be for 4.5 days per week, with a half day each week taken as planning, preparation and risk assessment time. Each school will communicate the details of this at the end of next week.

Does my child have to come to school?

We sincerely hope that every family in the Primary year groups offered will return their children to school feeling comfortable with the measures we have in place (see below). However, the complexity of the last few months means that we will have some children and families who cannot take up places due to shielding or may feel uncertain at this time. The government has clarified that pupils who do not attend will not be penalised at this time; however schools will have a duty to require absence notification in the normal way for these year groups.

To assist in our planning we would be grateful if parents of children in the designated year groups could indicate whether their children will be attending school using the following survey link:

<https://tinyurl.com/STAR-attendance>

Please complete by *midday* on Friday 22 May

What will our offer involve and what control measures are in place to ensure my child's safety?

Working alongside national advice, NYCC and various external health and safety bodies, our Trust has produced a risk assessment process. Every school within the Trust has used this to guide their detailed plans. Through this process, we have identified that our primary schools will need to phase their re-opening process due to the numbers of pupils who would be accessing the school site.

We have made provision for additional cleaning (including during the teaching day). We will also provide sanitising stations and other control measures and will continue to enhance this according to need.

School meals will be a 'grab a bag' type packed lunch, served in the teaching space or on rota in the dining area, with social distancing measures again applied. Similarly, communal time such as break and lunchtime will be timetabled carefully and supervised to maintain social distancing.

All families accessing the school site will be given detailed guidance which may involve staggered start and finish times, changes to class bases and staffing, along with bespoke timetables for when on site. This will allow for social distancing when moving around the school site. Teaching spaces are being set up to maintain social distancing – class sizes will vary according to school and room layout, but no class will be larger than 15 pupils. Pupils will tend to work in these groups and movement between groups and spaces will be minimised.

Every school in the Trust has had to assess its pupil groups, staff available, space available and then consider a bespoke timetable which will undoubtedly mean a change to the curriculum on offer. We may need to make changes to our normal cycle of teaching, planning and provision according to staffing and individual need, but I am sure there will still be a positive impact from our pupils returning to school.

When you receive them, please ensure you read the details from your child's school carefully as it is vital to ensure the wellbeing and safety of everyone involved.

Secondary Schools

To which year groups are we reopening and why?

We hope to provide some part time, face-to-face provision for students in Years 10 and 12 only. This is in line with the government guidance that states: *"We will ask secondary schools, sixth form and further education colleges to offer some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of year 10 and year 12 students who are due to take key exams next year, alongside the full time provision they are offering to priority groups."*

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When will our Secondary Schools reopen ?

If we receive a go ahead from the government on **28 May** when certain national criteria are met, our **provisional** plan is as follows:

w/b 1st June Our STAR Secondary schools will only be open for vulnerable children and those from key worker families.

w/b 8thth June Staggered, part time, face-to-face provision for some students in Years 10 and 12 only will begin .

We are currently awaiting further government guidance about what this means in practice. We hope to be in a position to share details of this provision with Year 10 and Year 12 families during the week beginning 1st June. At this time we will also survey families to inform us of their intentions regarding return to school.

Please note, that the Secondary provision will be part time, and designed to support distance learning that will continue to be provided.

What about the other year groups?

For any children not attending school, we will continue to maintain our distance learning offer and where possible run this in parallel with onsite provision. However, please understand that our revised provision will see *many* more Trust staff working on a daily basis onsite and there *may* be less capacity to create online content.

As ever, the STAR Multi-Academy Trust and its schools welcomes discussion and feedback. Please do contact the Headteacher of your child's school if you would like to discuss your school's provision further as it is so important to feel comfortable with your child's return to school.

Yours faithfully,

Martyn Sibley
Chief Education Officer