

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2020.

Dear Parents,

I hope that this letter finds you and your family safe and well and I wanted to continue to keep you up-to-date with developments re the potential opening of schools from June 2<sup>nd</sup> onwards.

As you are aware from previous letters, we are currently in the phase of risk assessing and putting measures and safeguards in place. This work is being done with our Trust Health and Safety Officer and other colleagues across the Trust. Again, your child's and staff's safety are at the forefront of all decisions that we are making and will continue to make.

I want to take the opportunity in this letter to give you an overview of what potential school opening for designated groups of children could look like in the form of a parent fact sheet.

### **Protective Measures: Fact Sheet for Parents**

Whilst we finalise our risk assessments and plan for opening, we wanted to provide families with an overview of the government guidance on the protective measures we are being asked to put in place.

No school can guarantee safety and all we can do is follow the guidance set out by the Department for Education.

#### **What will school look like and feel like for my child?**

We want to make it very clear that it will not look like 'normal school' and we need your help in preparing your child for the change which we have detailed in this factsheet.

#### **What are expectations of attendance?**

The Government is expecting all children who attend to do so full time and we are unable to offer part time attendance. Parents will not be fined for non-attendance but we are required to take a register and check on any children who have not attended.

#### **Will my child be able to mix with friends?**

The government guidelines state that children will be in *pods* of 15 with an assigned teacher, and nursery children in smaller pods. Children of critical workers will remain in their own mixed-age pods.

Pods are not permitted to mix, even at social times and throughout the day, they will stay with the teacher or teaching assistant assigned to that pod.



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### **Will my child be with their class teacher?**

Your child is not guaranteed to be with their usual class teacher. They may be with their teacher, a teacher from a different year group or a teaching assistant.

### **Are children expected to socially distance in school?**

No. Once in pods, 2m social distancing is not required but they should try to stay as far apart as possible. Children in Y1, Y6 or key worker children will be sat at desks which are spaced out with individual equipment.

In Nursery and Reception, this is impossible and the children will mix. We will encourage them to distance but they are very young and we cannot sit them at desks and we cannot always keep them 2m apart.

### **What will drop off and pick up look like? How will you ensure adults socially distance?**

Adults are required to stay 2m apart. We will have staggered start times and strict drop off zones and parents will be unable to enter the building. One adult will be able to bring children to school and siblings who are not attending, cannot come on site. Parents will need to say goodbye at a distance and cannot approach the entry door.

### **What does my child need to bring to school?**

The only permitted items will be packed lunch boxes. Please leave all school bags, toys and equipment at home.

The government has asked that parents apply usual rules to clothing and we would ask that they come to school in clean clothes every day.

### **What happens at lunchtime?**

To minimise risk, we will provide all children eligible for free school meals with a packed lunch. We ask that all other children bring a packed lunch to school. Please also send in a water bottle. The children will eat in their pods and not in the dining hall.

### **Will they be continuing with the same lessons as before lockdown?**

Due to the nature of the pods, children will not be returning to the same lessons and we will prioritise wellbeing activities as per the government guidance.

We are required by the government to remove all soft furnishings and toys with intricate parts and this will limit the curriculum which we can offer to our Nursery and Reception children, and they will not have the same free-flow approach.

We will assess how we phase in the curriculum offer for all year groups and we will continue to provide the home learning provision for those not in school.



### **Will staff wear PPE? Will the children be wearing masks?**

Staff in schools are not required to use PPE and children are not required to wear masks. Where a child needs first aid or shows symptoms of Covid-19, they will be attended to by a member of staff wearing PPE.

### **How will my child access toilets if they need to stay in a pod?**

We will need to stagger the use of toilets for each pod and part of our risk assessment is to determine if we have enough toilets to operate safely.

### **I am not a critical worker, my Y1 child will be attending so can I send my Y3 child in as well so that I can go to work?**

Current government guidance states that siblings in Y2 - Y5 are unable to attend unless you are a critical worker.

### **What happens if a child or adult starts coughing or displaying other symptoms?**

If a child or adult in a pod starts coughing, we will call the parents immediately and ask you to collect them. Government guidelines state that they should isolate for 7 days and family members for 14 days.

### **What happens if a child or adult tests positive for COVID-19?**

If a child or adult in a pod tests positive for COVID-19, we will inform every parent of any children in that pod. The other members of the pod will need to isolate for 14 days.

### **So how can I support my child and prepare for the phased opening?**

We have set out a number of things you can do to support us in opening up the school safely and to prepare your children for their return:

- Talk to your child about what it is going to be like going back. Help them prepare for staying in pods and the possibility that they will not see all of their friends.
- Talk to your child about social distancing. It is going to be really hard to see their friend and not fling their arms around them. They need to understand that they will be sat apart at their own station.
- Help your child be informed about the virus and the hygiene measures. Resources can be found here <https://www.e-bug.eu/>
- Talk to your child about their behaviour in school. They will need to follow our school behaviour policy. They cannot run off if they become frustrated. We can help them but they need to stay in their pod for the safety of themselves and others.
- Prepare your child for saying goodbye to you at a distance. Young children are going to find this hard; talk to them about what it is going to look like. We know that this is going to be upsetting.
- We ask parents to adhere to the drop off and entry systems we put in place; we need to keep you all moving. Please do not congregate with other parents, even at a 2m distance as it will prevent us getting children into school safely.
- Please do not be upset with us if we are unable to stop and talk like we usually do.



- Please endeavour to send them to school in clean clothes every day. We appreciate that you may not own enough uniform or things may no longer fit so please talk to us if this is a problem.
- Help us keep school safe by observing social distance when not in school. Please do not congregate with friends at the park and apply the government guidance.
- If your child shows symptoms, let us know. They need to isolate for 7 days and the entire family should isolate for 14 days.

Further guidance can 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>

Whilst we endeavour to open to all the specified year groups as well as continuing to open for children of critical workers, we will be led by our risk assessment and we may have to prioritise, as follows:

1. children of critical workers
2. children with EHCPs
3. vulnerable children
4. specific year groups.

And so, it may be that not all groups will be invited back on 2nd of June. We may need to phase the opening to eligible groups.

The Prime Minister is due to make his final announcement on school openings on the evening of 28th May and until then we will be acting on regular DfE updates and guidance. Therefore we cannot let you know exactly what our phased opening will look like and we may not be able to let you know who we will be open to until 1st of June.

Schools are the heart of the community where we gather to educate, socialise and be with friends. This feels very different and this is not the experience that any of us want your child to have. It is sad that we cannot all be together at this time and we hope that by putting these measures into , we can gradually get back to our school feeling like a family again.

I hope that this provides further reassurance of our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of every member of our Ilsham family.

Take care of yourselves and each other and I will be in touch with you once we have further details and updates. Thank you as always, for your continued support and understanding at this time. I hope you and your family remain safe and well

Best wishes,

Miss D Ryan (*Head of Academy*)