



15<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to update you on the potential reopening of schools to some year groups from early June 2020 and further year groups at a later date. We say potential because whether this date will be met for all schools or for individual schools depends on a number of factors. Notably, the government has said, "We will only do this provided that the 5 key tests set by government justify the changes at the time, including that the rate of infection is decreasing and the enabling programmes set out in the recovery strategy are operating effectively. As a result, we are asking schools, colleges and childcare providers to plan on this basis, ahead of confirmation that these tests are met." These five tests are:

1. Making sure the NHS can cope
2. A sustained and consistent fall in the daily death rate
3. Rates of infection are decreasing to manageable levels
4. Ensuring supply of tests and PPE can meet future demand
5. Being confident that any adjustments would not risk a second peak that would overwhelm the NHS.

On Monday evening, the Department for Education published a number of documents for schools and parents. We will provide the links for you here and summarise some of the key points below.

**This is the guidance for parents and carers:** [www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june)

**These are the actions that the government has asked schools to take to prepare for reopening to more children:** [www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/actions-for-education-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/actions-for-education-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020)

**These are the protective measures that the government is asking schools to implement prior to and during the reopening of schools to more children:** [www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings)

Some key points to be aware of from the guidance to schools are:

- Classes should be split in half so that there are no more than 15 children in each group; this will mean that half of all children will be taught by an adult who is not their regular teacher and in a room that is not their classroom
- There is no expectation of social distancing within each group but there is an expectation that each group will not interact with other groups; where social distancing is possible, for example with older children, this should be implemented
- The government is encouraging parents of eligible children to send their children to school but parents will not be fined for non-attendance at school at this time, and schools will not be held accountable for



attendance levels

- It is recommended that there are staggered start and finish times for different classes/groups to reduce the number of people gathering in the vicinity of the school
- Children and staff who have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable have been advised to shield and we would not expect these people to attend school but should be supported to learn or work from home
- Staff and children should not attend if they display symptoms of the coronavirus or are self-isolating due to symptoms in their household (following the current government guidance).
- Children, staff and their households will be eligible for testing if they become ill with coronavirus symptoms; if one of these people tests positive, the staff and children who are in that group will be sent home and asked to self-isolate for 14 days
- School meals will resume as normal, with a slightly amended menu to ensure that the kitchen staff are able to work more safely; the locations and timings of service are likely to vary from the norm, as will playtimes, although we would endeavour to keep these within reasonable timescales.

In addition to the government determining whether the 5 key tests justify a reopening of schools to more children in early June, there are additional variables that will impact on each school's ability to do this. Unions that represent school staff across the country (teachers, support staff and school leaders) have concerns about how the guidance affects their members and whether sufficient safe working practices are being implemented to safeguard the adults in school; they are liaising with the Department for Education on behalf of their members to gain answers and reassurance on some key issues that staff are concerned about. In addition to this, the governing body and senior leaders have a duty of care to all members of our school community – children, staff and families – and will need to feel confident that the measures we are able to put in place reduce the level of risk to a reasonable and manageable level.

Taking into account all of the above, we are preparing our own plans and responses to the government's announcement, including working with Bristol City Council on a risk assessment, in advance of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 for some year groups but with a view that it may or may not happen on that date. In order to support our planning, it would be really useful if we could gauge how many of you would decide to send your children into school when it becomes applicable for your child(ren)'s year group(s). Please complete this short survey by Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May <https://ggl.t.co.uk/planned-primary-attendance/?skipHAP=y>

We understand that this is a very complex and difficult issue for all of us and that the implications of schools partially opening, fully opening or remaining closed to most children are different for each family. For each of us, there is a careful balance to be found between our own need to work and maintain our financial stability alongside the health, safety and welfare of our children, our staff, our families and the wider community. In the longer term, we hope to get back to some sense of normality so that our children can continue their education and personal development with the best resources that we have available. For now, we will do the best that we can within the government's guidance and our own assessments of risk.

Stay safe and take very good care of yourselves.

Yours faithfully,

Sarah Baker  
CEO GGLT

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Headteacher

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Chair of Governors



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