

8th July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: September opening for all children

I hope you and your family are safe and well and coping with the continued demands of these uncertain times.

The Department of Education has now published plans for schools to reopen to all pupils in September and I am writing to share with you the arrangements that NEST schools are making to prepare for full reopening. The Government have set out a System of Controls that should be in place in all schools which are outlined below:

Schools have been directed to **ensure** that the following are in place from September:

- arrangements for people (staff or pupils) who are ill to stay at home;
- systems for robust hand and respiratory hygiene;
- enhanced cleaning arrangements within the school;
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace if cases of Covid-19 occur;
- detailed risk assessments.

Schools have also been asked to **give consideration to**:

- how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination, so far as is reasonably practicable;
- grouping children together (into distinct cohorts or 'bubbles') where possible;
- avoiding contact between these groups / bubbles where possible.

Schools are already operating these measures successfully and will now scale up their system of controls as all pupils return in September. The DfE has stipulated that the 'bubble system' should still be in operation and numbers in bubbles will be able to be increased to 30, effectively becoming a 'class bubble'. These 'class bubbles' will have limited contact with other class bubbles within the school day. Headteachers are now in the process of planning for full reopening and will be updating their Risk Assessments to ensure that they comply fully with the compulsory safety requirements listed in the guidance. These Risk Assessments will be published on schools' websites by the end of term.

Breakfast and after school care provision will recommence in September. Please be aware that children from different bubbles will be allowed to mix with each other within this provision and providers will be ensuring that robust virus controls are in place. We request that parents are cautious if they use multiple providers for before and after school care and/or clubs, as this can increase the risk of infection spreading between settings. School clubs, run before or after school, will not recommence until at least after the October half term, so that Headteachers can fully test their risk assessments with larger numbers of pupils.

Headteachers will be writing to parents and carers shortly to provide details of each school's specific arrangements for opening in September in terms of timetabling, drop off, pick up etc. Implementing virus controls will mean that parents will need to continue to be flexible and accommodating as schools scale up their safety measures and keep their school community safe. Staggered start and end times will continue to be in place. Schools will also continue to work on ways to maintain contact with you, as parents and carers, as there will be limited access to each school site.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our NEST Headteachers and staff for the energy and commitment they have shown, and continue to show, to support our children and families. The last months have certainly presented many challenges and I am really impressed with the way in which our schools have worked together for the good of everyone in the NEST community.

I would also like to thank you, our parents and carers, for the part you have played in supporting your children with their learning at home and the helpful feedback you have provided to our schools. We are very much looking forward to welcoming all our children back in September and are busy planning a curriculum to meet the children's' needs as well as ensuring that each child feels welcomed and supported.

For your information, the DfE has published guidance for parents about plans for schools to fully reopen in the Autumn Term which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>

Yours faithfully,

Paula Farrow
CEO