

23 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: March 8th 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 Prime Minister has now set out plans for schools to reopen to all pupils from March 8th and I am writing to share with you the arrangements that NEST schools are making to prepare for full reopening. For your information, the DfE has published guidance for schools to fully reopen which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

Schools are already implementing comprehensive safety measures successfully, in line with their risk assessments, and will prepare to expand these measures in preparation for all pupils to return on March 8th. The DfE has stipulated that the class 'bubble system' should continue to be in operation. These 'class bubbles' will have limited contact with other class bubbles within the school day. Schools will also continue to ensure that occupied spaces are well ventilated, children wash their hands regularly and that enhanced cleaning is in place. In addition to the system of controls already in place, all school staff now have access to twice weekly rapid testing. Headteachers will be reviewing and updating their risk assessments to ensure that they comply with the most recent health and safety guidance. Updated risk assessments will be published on schools' websites.

Headteachers will inform families of the restart date of the breakfast and after school care provision, the provision will be different for each of our schools. 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. Your school will also inform you when other school clubs will be recommencing following a full assessment of the risks and logistics.

Headteachers will be writing to parents and carers shortly to provide details of each school's specific arrangements for opening in March in terms of timetabling, drop off, pick up etc. Implementing virus controls will mean that parents and carers 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 and parents, carers and visitor access will remain limited at each school site. Government guidance stipulates that staff should wear masks in communal areas and moving around the school. Any adults entering the school site are also required to wear face masks. Parents and carers are reminded not to gather together around the gates at the start and close of the school day. In the event of an infection being reported, schools will continue to follow PHE guidance in relation to closure of bubbles.

Once again, 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. We are really looking forward to welcoming all our children back on March 8th and are busy planning a curriculum to meet the children's' needs as well as ensuring that each child feels welcomed and supported.

Yours faithfully,

Paula Farrow
CEO