



Opening schools more widely: information for parents and carers

Date: Summer 2

The following information is some key points to help you to prepare for some pupils to return to school.

The government has asked schools to prepare to open more widely to pupils.

We're sending this to all of you, even though only some of you will have children coming back to school in the next few weeks. This is so that you're prepared for when we can welcome more and more children.

Planning for a safe process to open our school more widely has been challenging and some of the changes will not suit everyone. However, we're following government guidelines and tried to make the plan as safe as possible.

'As a result of the huge efforts everyone has made to adhere to strict social distancing measures, the transmission rate of coronavirus (COVID-19) has decreased. We therefore anticipate, with further progress, that we may be able, from the week commencing 1 June, to welcome back more children to early years, school and further education settings. 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 roadmap 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.'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

Our plans

These plans are subject to change - we'll continue to update you when we can.

The government aims to confirm details on 28 May. We appreciate that leaves timescales very tight. However, if you've had it confirmed with school, then be assured we will definitely have a space for your child.

Week commencing 01 June 2020

On Monday 01 June, we'll not be open. This is so that we can prepare for increased numbers the next day.

For the rest of that week, we're expecting the number of children to rise substantially. This prediction is based on your survey responses, which indicate that more and more key workers will be required to be back at work, and therefore the demand for places from families who are key workers is projected to at least treble in size.

If actual numbers match the survey responses, we'll already have significantly increased numbers and will be close to capacity. We're determined to accommodate these children in line with all safety guidance we've received.

Please note that we'll be open until 3.20pm on Monday to Thursday (see below, when we talk about the staggered start and end times to the day). We'll close at 12 pm on Fridays. This will continue until further notice.

All children who have been regularly attending school in the last few weeks have a place in this week. We've confirmed with other parents/carers if their child has a place at school starting in this week.

Week commencing 08 June 2020

This week is open to some review based on the numbers we've had in school in the previous week. Our current aim is to open school more widely to a small number of additional Year 1 and Year 6 children. There are various criteria that we're considering, such as criteria around free school meals, which seems a fair way to do this.

As before, we can and will accommodate any additional children in line with all safety guidance we've received.

Week commencing 15 June 2020

This week is open to a lot of review based on the numbers coming in to school. We have three broad options that we'll continue to consider:

1. continue to open school more widely to limited numbers of Year 1 and Year 6 children (two of the year groups identified by the government as a priority)
2. invite children from other year groups where we know exceptional circumstances and/or there is a real need
3. consider opening for children in Reception where the families qualify for free school meals

Our preferred options at this stage are Option 1 or 2, or some sort of combination. Option 3 is less likely based on survey responses and our capacity to make sure provision is safe for the youngest children, and – importantly – provision is appropriate.

Who should attend?

To confirm: children who have been attending school in the last few weeks have a place from Tuesday 02 June.

We've confirmed with other parents/carers if their child has a place at school from Tuesday 02 June.

For parents who are not key workers:

We'll communicate with you when we have space and capacity to welcome your child back at school. Following reviews each week, we intend to invite more and more children back to school. If you choose to send your child to school, we encourage you to send them every day:

- if you don't send your child every day, it means a place in school is being taken up that we can't easily allocate to another child
- with consistent numbers, we can plan appropriate staffing
- with consistent numbers, we can also plan sequences of lessons; these will be harder for your child to access if they only attend for a couple of days each week

For parents who are key workers:

If you're a key worker, we understand that you don't have a great deal of choice about whether your child attends school or not, and you might still have concerns about your child attending school. We understand that you might prefer to only have your child attend when you need to. At some point, hopefully when parents / carers feel comfortable and confident, we'll begin to expect your child to attend on a daily basis. In the meantime, we appreciate that some of you might prefer sending your child back to school only when you need to.

For all:

A register for attendance will be carried out every day.

Those not attending will continue to have access to home learning tasks published on our website.

Our priorities

We want our school to continue to be a happy and healthy place to learn.

During the school closure, we know that children may have had very different experiences in terms of family life (for example, they may have experienced bereavement) and in terms of learning (for example, some will have been able to access the home learning enthusiastically, and others less so). As a result, we know that lessons in school won't be as they were before, though many of the same good teaching principles apply.

Some of our priorities will be:

- the safety and hygiene of children and adults, a priority above all else
- the wellbeing of children: we'll talk, play games, read stories
- to establish rules and new routines, but in a gentle way
- to wash hands frequently: we've timetabled many key points in our day when this must happen
- to get outside as much as possible (and when this happens, high-touch areas, such as tables, chairs, door handles and taps, will be cleaned)

Our learning priorities will be the core skills of reading, writing and maths, but there will be time for other, enriching/relaxing activities, too. Lessons will be shorter to allow for handwashing and other practical considerations that weren't needed before lockdown.

Minimising contact and mixing

Children will be placed in groups of around ten (determined by classroom space) and will work with the same adults. These consistent, separate groups will be referred to as *bubbles*. Each bubble will be assigned a classroom to be used by that bubble only. It's not possible for every child to be in their own classroom with their own teacher. Children and adults from one bubble will not mix with those from another.

In the classrooms, children will sit two metres away from others. They will be provided with their own learning packs with essential resources – pencils, whiteboards and pens, etc.

Frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices

Children will be expected to wash their hands frequently: on arrival at school; before and after playtimes and lunch times; before leaving school; after using tissues; before and after using toilets; and at any other appropriate times. We strongly encourage you to send your child with hand cream.

Cleaning

Each time the children head outside, there'll be an adult who will wipe down high-touch areas. We'll also close at noon on Fridays to allow for rooms to be thorough cleaning.

Other safeguarding

Leeds City Council provided schools with a very comprehensive risk assessment document which covered 24 areas, including

- handwashing
- cleaning
- social distancing
- consideration for clinically extremely vulnerable and vulnerable staff and pupils
- controlling access into the school for staff, pupils and members of the public

Our school leaders have been working through the various points under these headings, totaling around 225. We're confident by taking a slow and measured approach, we can continue to make school a happy, healthy and safe place to be.

Some key points for you to know

Drop off and pick up

- Avoid coming into the school building, including to visit the office, unless by appointment.
- Make sure the bubble leader is fully up to date with your contact details and your child's medical information.
- Drop off and pick up your child at the allocated time, using the allocated doors. Staggered entry and exit will avoid congestion on school grounds. On arrival, please use your own judgement about which gate to use: double gates onto the KS2 playground; usual gates on to the KS2 playground; or the pedestrian gate at the top of the carpark.
- Only one adult should drop off and pick up. In accordance with social distancing guidelines, this must be someone in your household.
- Avoid congregating on the playground and always keep at least 2m from other families.
- Leave the school site immediately after dropping off or picking up.
- At every drop off, speak to the bubble leader to confirm two things: no-one in your household is displaying symptoms; and current social distancing guidance has been followed. This means that older children must not come to school alone. If you have more than one child attending, speak with your youngest child's bubble leader. In order to keep everyone safe, if social distancing guidelines are not being followed, you'll be asked to collect your child from school and keep them at home for 14 days (this is so that we can all be confident there is time away from school for symptoms to develop).

Other changes to school routines

School uniform

On the first day of the week, children should wear their usual school uniform. They should wear a clean set of clothes every day. If this means you run out of uniform, children should wear clothing that is as near to school uniform as possible. This could include PE t-shirts or other plain clothing.

Timings

To allow for staggered starts and exits the following plan is to be used:

Surnames L – Z drop off 8.40 and collect at 3.00

Surnames E – K drop off 8.50 and collect at 3.10

Surnames A – D drop off 9.00 and collect at 3.20

For families with two surnames, please use the youngest family member's surname.

Remember – Friday is a shorter day so we can clean even more thoroughly:

Surnames L – Z collect at 12.00

Surnames E – K collect at 12.10

Surnames A – D collect at 12.20

The school day

There will be changes to the timetable to allow for staggered playtimes and lunchtimes.

There will be changes to the curriculum. There'll be a big focus on emotional well-being and Living and Learning skills. English and Maths will be prioritised: teaching and learning goals will be to close any gaps in learning that might have arisen.

Classrooms will be set up to allow children to sit two metres apart. Your child will be allocated a desk and their own set of stationery.

We'll be learning outside as much as possible – the virus isn't as easy to catch outside, and it also means desks, chairs, door handles and other high-touch surfaces can be cleaned throughout the day.

Lunch and refreshments

If your child has a school dinner, it'll be a packed lunch type meal for the next few weeks. This so they can eat it in their room with children in their bubble.

Other children should bring a packed lunch.

If your child has milk, this will still be provided.

Your child must bring water in their own water bottle, taken home each day.

Your child might want to bring some fruit for a mid-morning snack (we'll provide a plastic bag to put this in if needed).

Things to bring to school

We're limiting the number of things that children bring in to school. Your child should bring only:

- a filled water bottle
- jacket
- lunch box (if they're not having a school dinner)
- fruit (ideally in a disposable bag or wrapper, but we'll provide a bag if needed)
- hand cream (optional, but this could be really useful)
- sun hat when appropriate

In warm weather, we'd prefer all-day sun cream to be applied before school. If this is a problem, children can bring sun cream that can then be left at school.

Children should **not** bring bags or PE kits.

Children will take home only their own belongings. They won't be bringing home things such as reading books, homework books or word sets.

Home learning

We'll continue to set three daily home learning activities for the many children who will remain at home. Over the next half-term of teaching and learning, there may have to be changes because more teachers will be in school, working with the increased numbers attending. The changes might include:

- online teaching might look a bit different – there might be shorter videos, for example, although we'll try really hard to avoid this, especially in the first few weeks
- some learning might be set by a teacher in one of our sister Sphere Federation schools
- some learning might be set by a teacher in our school but not in your child's class
- teachers may not be able to reply to emails as quickly as they have done as they'll be in school teaching

Cases and confirmed cases of Covid-19

Symptoms to be vigilant for:

- a new, continuous cough
- a high temperature
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

What if your child has symptoms of Covid-19?

If your child displays symptoms of Covid-19 **at home**, please don't send them to school. Please keep them at home for seven days. The rest of the household should take precautions, too.

Tell school so we can alert others if we need to.

If your child displays symptoms of Covid-19 **at school**, we'll contact you to collect your child as a matter of urgency.

We'll encourage the parent/carer to have their child tested:

- for children who are five or over, you should access this via the 111 online coronavirus service
- for those children who are under five, you should call 111

If your child tests positive for having Covid-19, your child should self-isolate for seven days, and all others in the household should self-isolate for 14 days.

If your child tests negative, they may return to school and other household members can end their self-isolation.

Parents/carers should tell us the results of the test as soon as they can.

Further guidance is available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

What if someone else in the household has symptoms of Covid-19?

Please don't send your child to school if someone in the household has symptoms. Tell school so we can alert others if we need to.

Further guidance is available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

What happens at school if there's a case of Covid-19?

No one will be named, but if a member of the bubble has been sent home with symptoms, you'll be informed. You can continue sending your child to school unless a case is confirmed. The outcome of a test will be shared with the bubble.

If a case is confirmed, everyone in the bubble will stay at home and isolate for 14 days. (The rest of the household doesn't need to do this.)

The bubble's room will be deep-cleaned.

This is constantly changing situation. The information here is all subject to change.

We'll continue to update you as much as we possibly can – keep looking out for our daily website posts and emails.

Thank you to all for your support over the last few weeks, and thank you also for being so understanding as we prepare to open school more widely, despite so much uncertainty.