

# Frequently Asked Questions about returning to school

We understand that there are lots of questions that you may have about the gradual reopening of schools. We have listened to your questions and have put together a list of the most frequently asked questions. If you have a question that isn't answered here please speak to your child's class teacher when they contact you or phone school.

## **- When can my child return to school?**

*We have spoken to all parents and prioritised children according to these criteria:*

- children with key worker parents; if there are 2 parents in the household they must both be key workers*
- children with allocated social workers or family support workers from external agencies*
- children with parents that need to go back to work; if there are 2 parents in the household this must apply to both of them*
- increasing vulnerabilities that may cause the family to need support from external agencies*

*We are slowly increasing our numbers onsite to ensure that it is as safe as possible for the children to return. We will contact you if we are able to offer you a place.*

## **- Is it safe for my child to return?**

*This is a personal decision, but we have carried out a full risk assessment to make the school environment as safe as possible. The risk assessment includes:*

- reducing class sizes*
- staggering lunchtimes to ensure that cleaning of the area can be carried out in between sittings*
- staggering playtimes*
- allocating toilets to each class*
- keeping children in the same group throughout the week*
- staggering drop off and pick ups*
- frequent hand washing; soap, paper towels, hand sanitiser and tissues are available in each classroom*

## **- I'm not sure that my child is able to socially distance, how will this work in school?**

*Classrooms have been set up so that the tables and chairs are 2m apart. There are markings on the floor in the corridor, hall and playground that are 2m apart to help children keep their distance when walking around school, lining up after playtime or queuing for their lunch.*

## **- What happens if I am in the shielding group? Can I send my child back to school?**

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*If anyone in the household is classed as extremely vulnerable, then unfortunately your child is unable to return to school currently.*

## **- What learning will happen when the child return? What happens if they stay at home, will they fall behind?**

*Until we have all of the children back in school we will be running an interim curriculum, which will be focusing on wellbeing and getting used to the 'new normal' of social distancing. They will also be doing the class dojo activity that has been set for their class that day. Your child will not fall behind by staying at home and there will still be daily activities set on Class Dojo for you to complete.*

## **- I am concerned that my child won't cope with the change in routine if they come back to school.**

*We are aware that things are going to be different for those children returning to school; they maybe in a different classroom, have a different teacher or teaching assistants or be with children that aren't normally in their class. However, all of the staff are known to the children and they will be aware of any specific resources, such as PECS books or I'm working for cards, that your child would normally use in school. Every class will use a visual timetable to help prepare the children for what is happening that day.*

## **- I am concerned that my child won't see their friends if they come back to school and this will raise anxieties.**

*It is possible that your child's friends won't be in school when your child returns, as we are having a limited number of children onsite currently. However, we have set the class groups up so that the children are with other pupils from their class or nearby classes.*

## **- Will speech therapy continue?**

*Speech therapy will continue in the same way that it has been happening throughout the lockdown, which has either been via zoom or phone calls home. There are currently no plans to restart the 1:1 sessions in school.*

## **- Will staff be wearing PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and how will the children cope with this?**

*Yes, there will be times in school when the staff wear PPE; current advice is for staff to wear PPE when carrying out personal care such as changing nappies or feeding. If the 2m distance cannot be guaranteed, then staff may wear masks.*

*The children that are currently in school have dealt very well with seeing staff wearing it. We have a social story to help children with any anxieties over seeing staff wearing it and staff have been posting photos of themselves wearing PPE on dojo to show the children what they may look like prior to them returning to school.*

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## **- My child doesn't like washing their hands, how will this work in school?**

*Staff will encourage and if needed will physically help a child to wash their hands regularly.*

## **- Transport is a concern; how will this be managed and how do I know that this is safe?**

*Transport is respecting social distancing and there are currently only 2 children on each bus; this may increase to 3 on the bus but only if there are siblings on the route and they will sit next to each other. The children will sit in the same seat on each journey. Drivers and guides have been issued with PPE too.*

## **- Will my child still get a performance review?**

*Yes there will still be end of year reports and if your child's EHCP hasn't been reviewed yet then these meetings will happen towards the end of June either via Zoom or a phone call. These meetings will be arranged at the start of June.*

## **- My child is in Year 5 and I need to make choices for their secondary school, I am worried that I may not be able to visit or make the selections in time.**

*This is a big choice, that causes anxieties each year; more so this year when you are unable to visit schools. Currently we do not know when the secondary transfer forms will need to be returned by and as soon as we do we will communicate this will all Year 5 parents. Speak to the class teacher when they contact you each week and ask about which schools they would recommend, then have a look at those schools' websites. Hopefully more information will come out about this soon.*

## **- My child is moving to secondary school in September, how can you support them with this?**

*We are working hard with all of the schools that your children are moving to, to help ensure that the transition is as successful as they are in previous years. There will be more details about this coming soon, but have a look at the secondary school websites for photos and information that you could share with your child. Also there are social stories on our website and other transition activities have been shared on Class Dojo.*