



Opening schools more widely: information for parents and carers

Date: 09.06.20

If your child is returning to school, the following information presents some key points for you to be aware of and to help you to prepare.

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

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

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

However, if you've had it confirmed with school, then be assured we definitely have a space for your child.

In the week commencing 01 June 2020, children who had been regularly attending school in the previous few weeks carried on attending. However, the number of children attending school increased threefold, mainly because more and more key workers were required to be back at work. In the following week, we continued to increase numbers, mainly by welcoming back some additional Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children.

Since 02 June 2020, our children have been returning to school and placed in 'bubbles' – a small group of children and adults who stay away from others in school.

For the future, we'll continue to increase numbers to school in two ways:

- increase the number of children in a bubble if it's safe to do so, or
- set up new bubbles in school (if there's space and staff to do so)

We'll invite children to return to school based on two board criteria:

- to continue to open school more widely to limited numbers of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children (year groups identified by the government as a priority)
- to invite children from other year groups where we know there are exceptional circumstances and/or there is a real need

If you're at home with your child and are really struggling in some way, please do get in touch.

Call us on 0113 268 5915

Send an email to Clare Weekes, the Head of School: moortownheadofschool@spherefederation.org

We'll do our best to support in some way.

As we open more widely, we only welcome additional children in line with all safety guidance we've received.

The last section of this document ('Opening schools more widely: social distancing and other Covid-19 safeguarding priorities') refers to some of the safety points.

For parents who are *not* key workers:

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 are:

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

Minimising contact and mixing

Children are in groups (typically of no more than ten) and work with the same adults. These consistent, separate groups are referred to as *bubbles*. Each bubble is 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 do not mix with those from another.

Moortown Primary is a unique school in terms of its size: parents like its small community feel, but it does present some challenges due to the size of its rooms. In the next few weeks, children will sit two metres away from others in the classrooms wherever possible, but we can't guarantee this in all cases – please take this on-board in your own decision-making.

Children are provided with their own learning pack with essential resources – pencils, whiteboards and pens, etc.

Frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices

Children are 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 is an adult who will wipe down high-touch areas. We are closing at lunchtime on Fridays to allow for rooms to be thoroughly cleaned.

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 school office is fully up to date with your contact details and your child's medical information – by phone call or email, preferably.
- Drop off and pick up your child at the allocated time, using the allocated gate and doors. Staggered entry and exit will avoid congestion on school grounds.
- 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 member of staff at the gate to confirm two things: no-one in your household is displaying symptoms; and current social distancing guidance has been followed. This means that, wherever possible, older children should 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

	Drop off / pick up point	Drop off time	Pick up time	Pick up time (Friday)
Reception	Reception gate	08.45	14.45	11.45
Years 1, 2	Year 1 playground door	09.00	15.00	12.00
Years 3, 4	Year 3/4 side entrance	09.15	15.15	12.15
Years 5, 6	Portacabin	09.30	15.30	12.30

If you're dropping off or picking up two children, please adhere to the timings for the youngest child.

The school day

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

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

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

We are 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 are continuing 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.

Opening schools more widely: social distancing and other Covid-19 safeguarding priorities

Date: 29 May 2020, updated 05.06.20 following LA H&S guidance

School leaders have prepared an extensive risk assessment to make sure that our children and staff stay safe in school from Tuesday 02 June 2020. Without our school community (pupils, parents / carers and staff) all adhering to the government guidance on social distancing, the measures we take in school will be undermined.

This policy outlines how children and staff can stay safe at school by being alert to social distancing beyond school hours, and by adhering to other aspects of staying safe in the context of coronavirus, such as handwashing and being alert to Covid-19 symptoms.

Although the following refers to 'child' and 'parent / carer', the content applies equally to staff members.

The policy has been produced following assessment of the risks surrounding coronavirus, many of which are set out in Leeds City Council's risk assessment template, and some of which are also raised by parents and staff – it's important to recognise these as valid concerns and attempt to address the issues raised.

Social distancing

The government's message about social contact is subject to reviews and updates, but we will always aim to follow the current message in school, and equally expect families to do so out of school. This is especially the case if your child is attending school.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

Since 01 June in England, you have been able to meet in groups of **up to six people** from different households **outside** as long as you **remain two metres apart**. This means that parents and carers must ensure their child stays two metres away from other people – hugging and hand-holding, games like tig, tackling in football should all be avoided.

The only people to enter a home should be members of that household.

We recognise that from 13 June, single people can 'bubble up' with a larger household to form a 'support bubble', provided that the two form a group together and not mix with others beyond that.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household>

If a child says something that indicates they or someone in their household has not followed government guidelines, we'll do some or all of the following.

- continue a conversation with the child in an **informal, friendly** way – this will help us to gain a better understanding and (hopefully) reassure ourselves that social distancing has not been undermined (there will be no leading questions)
- contact the child's parents / carers to discuss what the child has said and to clarify the situation
- isolate the child away from the rest of the children in their 'bubble' while we wait for more clarification from the child or their parents / carers

Equally, if an adult says something that indicates another family may not have followed government guidelines, we'll follow this up too.

Other Covid-19 safeguarding priorities

As well as social distancing, there are other Covid-19 safeguarding priorities. For example,

- handwashing (we have scheduled at least five times during the school day for this to happen)
- being alert to symptoms (high temperature; new, continuous cough; loss or change to sense of smell or taste) and making sure parents alert school if their child shows any of the symptoms

Pupil behaviour

Pupils' behaviour in Sphere Federation schools is good. We will continue to follow our Positive Relationships Policy (see website or contact school to request a copy) as we open up our schools more widely. The aims and positive and negative consequences set out in the policy remain important as more and more pupils return to school.

One of our school rules is 'We follow instructions'. As pupils return to school, this rule will continue to be important; for example:

- 👂 following instructions about different routines for arrival or departure
- 👂 following instructions on hygiene, such as handwashing
- 👂 following instructions on who pupils can socialise with

Serious poor behaviour in Sphere Federation schools is rare, but our Positive Relationships Policy does make reference to it; an extract is shown here:

'Serious misbehaviour (eg disrespect to staff, property or cultures, swearing, fighting) is unacceptable. Such behaviour would mean warnings are automatically by-passed to higher level warnings. We contact parents to keep them in the picture and to discuss ways to respond and gain a consistent message between home and school. A serious incident form... is typically completed in such cases.'

'The safety of the children is paramount in all situations. If a child's behaviour endangers the safety of others, the class teacher stops the activity and prevents the child from taking part for the rest of that session.'

The risk assessment that we have in place comes from Leeds City Council's risk assessment template, which states: *'The behaviour policy should include steps to be taken if pupils fail to follow the new rules and routines or deliberately put themselves or others at risk eg deliberately coughing or spitting on another person.'*

In the context of coronavirus, we would regard behaviour such as deliberate coughing or spitting as serious misbehaviour. For the safety of other pupils and our staff, we would therefore follow our Positive Relationships Policy: in particular, we would *'contact parents to keep them in the picture and to discuss ways to respond'*. Actions taken by us following such an incident would reflect the priorities set out here in the context of safeguarding and protecting staff and pupils from Covid-19; these are set out below. This overrides what is in the Positive Relationships Policy.

Actions we will take to follow the policy

Following all the points set out in this policy will all help to stop the spread of the virus. As such we will follow this policy strictly and communicate it frequently and widely.

In these very difficult times, we do need to prioritise staying safe for all our pupils, parents and staff. We will constantly review our risk assessment to ensure our policies and practices prioritise staying safe for all.

If we have concerns, we may have to ask a parent / carer to collect their child from school. This is because we have to be confident children can attend school in a way which does not undermine the safeguarding of others.

It is possible that we have to make a decision that we can't safely have a child at school due to concerns about social distancing. We would make that decision reluctantly, but the safeguarding of all pupils and staff must be our priority. (This could mean a child may lose their place in a bubble.)

'The decision as to whether a child can be or continue to be offered a place at present in school will be based on [an Individual Pupil Risk Assessment / IPRA] and will lie with a headteacher. Writing specific control measures into an IPRA for parents and pupils to follow the current government guidance outside of the school setting is perfectly acceptable. If you then felt that the child's / family's behaviour outside school was breaching those control measures and creating a significant risk to staff and other children within school, it is appropriate to take reasonable steps to manage that risk, which could include delaying or removing the offer of a placement in school.'

(Point 2, Health and Safety Bulletin 2020 no.22, Updates to the Coronavirus Risk Assessment 05.06.20)

'The final decision as to whether a child can be safely accommodated at the school rests with the headteacher / principal based on their risk assessment of the situation.'

(Saleem Tariq, Director of Children and Families, in a message to parents, 23.03.20)