

# COVID-19 School Reopening FAQs

Please see below some of the questions that we have anticipated you may have about our reopening. We have already had one or two questions from parents that we have endeavoured to answer. We thought it would be useful to share these with you.

## 1. Which year groups are returning to school?

The Government has asked primary schools to welcome back children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 alongside priority groups. The Government's ambition is to bring all primary school year groups for the last month of the summer half term if conditions nationally make it feasible. This will be kept under review.

Acre Hall plans to invite back Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 through a phased return whilst continuing to cater for children of key workers/vulnerable pupils. We will also look to extend our provision for children attending our Small Specialist Classes. We will not be able to accommodate Nursery pupils at this time (apart from those who attend our key worker/vulnerable pupil provision). Provision for children from all these year groups cannot be guaranteed as Acre Hall can offer only a set number of bubbles with limited capacity in each.

The return dates will be the following:

**Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June**

Children of critical workers who have been regularly attending/now need to attend

**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June**

In addition to the above pupils, Y6 pupils who require a school place rather than accessing the enhanced on line learning offer will return to school on a part time basis. Further details sent out soon.

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June**

In addition to the above pupils, Y1 pupils who require a school place rather than accessing the enhanced on line learning offer will return to school on a part time basis. Further details sent out soon.

Please see - Update – Wider Opening of Schools document on the website front page for full details.

## 2. Why aren't all the children coming back?

The DfE have based this on the need to reduce the rate of transmission of the virus. So have taken account of the need to reduce numbers returning as a gradual process and smaller groupings in classes can be maintained.

## 3. If one of my children is eligible to return can't their sibling come back too?

Sadly, the answer to this is 'no'. Siblings cannot attend unless they are in another of the selected year groups or you are a key worker/classed as a vulnerable family. This would raise the number of pupils attending the school too quickly.

#### 4. Does my child have to attend?

No one with symptoms should attend for any reason. All children in the selected groups may attend unless self-isolating or shielding. Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time and schools will not be held to account for attendance levels.

#### 5. I am worried that my child is vulnerable or that a family member is. Should I send them back to school?

Children and young people who are considered **extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding** should continue to shield and should not be expected to attend.

Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. A minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.

Children and young people who live in a household with someone who is **extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding** should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and the child or young person is able to understand and follow those instructions. As we will not be able to socially distance children within their class group, it would be advisable for these children to remain at home.

Children and young people who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) as defined in the **social distancing guidance** and including those who are pregnant, can attend. *DFE May 2020*

#### 6. How big will the classes be?

The DfE is recommending class group size should not exceed 15 pupils per small group and one teacher plus a TA where required. Where there are not enough teachers, Teaching Assistants will lead a group. Desks should be as far apart as the room allows.

Having completed risk assessments, classes will have between 8 and 10 children when we return.

#### 7. Will you guarantee that social distancing takes place e.g. keeping children 2m apart?

We will of course do our best to support distancing, especially with any adults in the school. DfE guidance states '*We know that, unlike older children and adults,*

*early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to early years and schools, we are taking this into account.'* **We will do our best to ensure that each class 'bubble' does not come into contact with other class bubbles. Children will only be able to socialise with children in their bubble, even at playtime. However, parents need to know that in returning to school there is a very real likelihood that children will touch one another and come into close contact at some point. The nature of the school site and the age of our children is such that this is unavoidable and we cannot be expected to respond to complaints around this when it inevitably happens. We cannot alleviate every risk and parents must understand what we are able to do and use this to inform their decision making.**

### **8. Why can't my children play with their friends from a different 'bubble' at break time?**

To enable us to maintain distance from others for each class bubble, it is important that children only play with children in their bubble. This helps us to limit the number of people each bubble comes into contact with, which will aid in preventing transmission.

### **9. What hygiene measures will be in place to prevent transmission?**

**We will:**

- Use the **COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance** to inform our school specific risk assessments.
- Ensure that sufficient handwashing facilities are available. All classrooms have sinks. Hand sanitiser will be available in areas without access to soap and water.
- Clean surfaces that children and young people are touching, such as toys, desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches, more regularly than normal.
- Ensure that we provide lidded foot operated bins for used tissues.
- Where possible, ensure spaces are well ventilated.
- Prop doors open, where safe to do so (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding), to limit use of door handles and aid ventilation.

**We will ensure that all adults and children:**

- Frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly.
- Clean their hands on arrival at school, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing.
- Children are encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose
- Use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use specific bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it').
- Ensure that help is available for children and young people who have trouble cleaning their hands independently.

**We will consider how to encourage young children to learn and practise these habits through games, songs and repetition.**

### **10. Will children be confined to the same classroom environment most of the day?**

Government advice on the Scientific evidence shows that the outdoor environment is much more manageable in terms of virus transmission. With the Summer weather coming we will be moving towards more of an outdoor learning approach, where possible. However, outside of this, we will keep children within their own classroom during the day.

### **11. How will lunch time work?**

The school will run sittings in the dining room/ classrooms to avoid too many children using indoor communal areas in school. Cooked lunches will return as the government has requested “schools are expected to reopen their kitchens and ensure that meals are able to be prepared and served safely”. Free School Meal children will continue to receive vouchers if they are not attending school. Those pupils bringing a packed lunch should wherever possible bring it in a disposable bag with all packaging being disposable.

### **12. What measures will school be employing to help prevent transmission?**

In addition to what has already been mentioned

We will:

- Give children a designated classroom and group (which we are referring to as their bubble) for lessons and play, to minimise the opportunity for mixing.
- Regularly clean the setting.
- Not allow children to bring in their own resources such as pencil cases.
- Use PPE such as gloves, aprons, masks, hand sanitiser and anti-bac wipes as identified in our Risk Assessments, when it is necessary to do so.
- Confine resources to rooms to minimise sharing and when sharing is essential (eg laptops and ipads), clean resources before transference.
- Organise lunchtimes and playtimes differently, keeping children in their bubbles.
- Be vigilant in identifying children with symptoms, isolate them and ask parents to collect them.
- Removal and/or restricting access to unnecessary items in classrooms.
- Removal and/or restricting access to some soft furnishings, soft toys and toys that are hard to clean.
- Not share PE equipment. All bubbles will have their own equipment in a box. Where it is not possible to have class resources, equipment will be cleaned between each class use.

### **13. Will my child be expected to share resources, such as pens and pencils?**

Where possible, children will be given their own equipment, which they must not share with anyone else. They must not bring any equipment in from home. Laptops and Ipads that are shared will be cleaned with an anti-bacterial wipe after use. We cannot say that some resources will not be handled by more than one child, especially in Nursery and Reception. We have spent

nearly half a year teaching our youngest children that sharing is good! Children will be encouraged to maintain good hand hygiene.

**14. My child is in the critical worker childcare provision currently but isn't in the year groups who will be starting back at school as defined by the government ?**

Priority group children will continue to come to school.

**15. Will everyone arrive at school at the same time causing an increase in risk?**

The school may organise a staggered drop off and collection time for pupils. (More details to follow) There will be a drop off zone from where the teacher will invite pupils in. Please wait outside until your child is called inside. Please make sure you stay 2 Metres apart from other families whilst waiting.

Only one parent or carer should accompany the child to school to minimise risk. Y6 pupils may still come to school unattended as long as they can adhere to any rules regarding distancing. Parents will not be invited to enter the building but will drop off as described above. Schools have no power under the law to enforce social distancing with parents other than to make that request.

Latecomers will need to come to the main entrance. Your child will then be collected and taken to their class by a staff member. Please do your utmost to ensure that your child is not late.

**16. Will the school have assembly/acts of worship?**

Class bubbles will have an opportunity for reflection within their daily session, but there will be no mass gatherings or daily acts of worship as a school for the time being.

**17. My child is feeling anxious about coming back to school, how can I prepare him/her?**

You will need to prepare your child by talking about what school was like and what it will be like now. It will be different. We will help you to prepare for this by putting pictures on our website to show what you and your child can expect, when things are ready.

Sharing social stories can be really helpful for young children and help to express the situation in a clear factual way.

It will be important to encourage your child to talk about their experiences in 'lockdown' and that this period is now ending.

### **18. Will children go straight back into normal lessons following the National Curriculum?**

**No, not initially.**

**The initial focus, for as long as we feel necessary, will be on supporting personal, social, health and emotional aspects of learning to support children's wellbeing. The children have all gone through an incredible period of change and may have experienced loss on a number of different levels. This shouldn't be ignored. However, we also know that children like routine; therefore, new routines will quickly be established and when children are ready, we will continue teaching lessons as normal.**

**We plan to make use of our outdoor learning environment as much as possible.**

**We will of course ensure that skills in English and Maths continue to be developed. We will work hard to ensure that children, who are remaining at home, get access to tasks via the SeeSaw.**

### **19. How will you support my child's emotional well-being?**

**In addition to that mentioned above, all staff will be available to provide support. Our SENCO and PSHCE leads will work to ensure that children's needs are met.**

**There will be plenty of opportunities for children to discuss their feelings, play, rebuild friendships and have 'break out' or 'chill out' spaces for times when they may feel overwhelmed.**

### **20. Will staff wear masks or PPE?**

**The Government guidelines state, 'The majority of staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases including:**

- children, young people and students whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs should continue to receive their care in the same way.**
- if a child, young person or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home. A fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then disposable gloves, a disposable apron and a fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.'**

## **21. Can my child wear a face mask in school?**

The latest government guidance says

Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended. Face coverings may be beneficial for short periods indoors where there is a risk of close social contact with people you do not usually meet and where social distancing and other measures cannot be maintained, for example on public transport or in some shops. This does not apply to schools or other education settings. Schools and other education or childcare settings should therefore not require staff, children and learners to wear face coverings. Changing habits, cleaning and hygiene are effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus. Face coverings (or any form of medical mask unless instructed to be used for specific clinical reasons) should not be worn in any circumstance by those who may not be able to handle them as directed (for example, young children, or those with special educational needs or disabilities) as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

Full transcript can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

## **22. Will my child need to wear a school uniform?**

Children do not need to wear uniform. It is important for the children to come to school in fresh clothing every day to reduce transmission risk and we understand that many children have now outgrown their uniform, Children should wear casual clothing that protects them from the sun and allows them to move easily and take part in outdoor activities. Hats and long sleeved tops may be needed for sun protection. We advise applying long lasting sun-cream before coming to school rather than bringing cream in. We will not be able to apply sun cream to children.

## **23. What should my child bring to school each day?**

Water bottles can be brought into school daily. It would help greatly if they were pre-filled. They must be taken home each day and washed. Coats and/or hats may be needed, especially as we will be using our outdoor spaces more. We would advise that you apply long lasting sun-cream if possible before coming to school rather than having to bring sun-cream in. We will not be able to apply sun-cream to any children.

P.E. kits, book bags, ruck sacks, etc will not be required and will help to ensure that classrooms and cloakrooms are as clutter-free as possible.

## **24. Will the breakfast club and after school club be open?**

Breakfast club will open at the later time of 8.15 am with a reduced cost of £1.50 to account for this. It will currently only be open to key worker and vulnerable families. No after school club will operate at present but this may change if a risk assessment shows that social distancing measures can still be

**maintained with the number of children wishing to attend. All enquires for places should be directed to Jo Stretton at After Acres - 07902205409**

**25. Will we allow visitors and volunteers into school?**

**We will minimise additional adults coming in and out of school until national restrictions are further relaxed.**

**26. Will extra-curricular clubs run (football club, dance club etc)?**

**No. These bring too many children into contact and mix the school groupings.**

**27. Will the school office be open?**

**Yes, but whenever possible we would ask that parents ring/email the school as opposed to presenting in person. At drop off and pick up times, you can leave letters and items for the office with your child's group leader. Please ensure that your child is not late. If they are unavoidably late due to an appointment, please come to reception school and we will escort your child to their group.**

**28. Will you continue to provide online home learning activities for children who do not return to school?**

**We will continue to set home learning activities during term-time, so that all children have access to provision to support their learning. With school reopening to a greater number, parents will need to be mindful that teaching staff may not be as responsive to parent messages as previously.**

**29. Will children and young people be eligible for testing for the virus?**

**The government advice is:**

**When settings open to the wider cohort of children and young people, all those children and young people eligible to attend, and members of their households, will have access to testing if they display symptoms of coronavirus. This will enable them to get back into childcare or education, and their parents or carers to get back to work, if the test proves to be negative. To access testing parents will be able to use the 111 online coronavirus service if their child is 5 or over. Parents will be able to call 111 if their child is aged under 5.**

**30. Will teachers and other staff be able to get tested if they have symptoms?**

**Access to testing is available to all essential workers. This includes anyone involved in education, childcare or social work – including both public and voluntary sector workers, as well as foster carers.**

**31. What will happen if a child in the class shows symptoms?**

**We will follow the Government guidelines set out below.**

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in an education or childcare setting, they must be sent home and advised to follow the **COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance**.

If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else. PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs). In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff has helped someone who was unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they do not need to go home (although this will be offered to any member of staff if the case arises) unless they develop symptoms themselves (and in which case, a test is available) or the child subsequently tests positive (see 'What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in a setting?' below). They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning the affected area with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. See the **COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance**.

### **32. What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in school?**

We will follow the Government guidance set out below.

When a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and students who are attending an education or childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus, and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario.

Where the child, young person or staff member tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation.

Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class or group within their childcare or education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases a larger number of other children, young people may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole class, site or year group. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.

**33. Will the school take my child's temperature every day?**

No, but we may use a non-invasive thermometer which points to the forehead if we suspect a child of having symptoms.

**34. Will there be any trips once school opens to more children?**

No. There are no plans to take the children out of the school grounds until further notice.

**35. How can I speak to the class teacher if we are not allowed into school?**

You can contact your child's class teacher via SeeSaw, e-mailing school or by calling school and speaking to the office team who will pass a message on.

**36. Why are different schools doing different things to reopen?**

Individual school circumstances are different - numbers in year groups, staff available to work, building layout etc.

**37. Can I bring in a change of clothes for my child?**

Some very young children do need a change of clothes in school. We would ask that you send these in a plastic bag and that we can keep them in school until required. This is to keep the need for items that come in from home to a minimum.

**38. Where can I find more information about returning to school?**

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