

21 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Preparing for wider reopening of schools on 1 June

As you will no doubt be aware by now, the Government has asked all primary schools to plan for reintroducing pupils in Nursery, Reception, and Years 1 and 6, in addition to children from existing priority groups, from 1 June.

We have been looking at all the available guidance very carefully to plan how we may be able to meet the Government's expectations while safeguarding the physical and emotional wellbeing of children and staff across all Anthem primary schools.

There is still some uncertainty about whether this wider reopening will go ahead, but to ensure we are ready if it does, the Trust has instructed its primary headteachers to adhere to some key principles when deciding how and if they can make this happen at their school, which I have outlined below.

Firstly, the Department for Education (DfE) guidance is clear that it does not want schools to use a rota system to bring pupils back to school. Although using rotas would make it possible for more children to attend, we feel it would also increase the risk to staff as it would bring them into contact with a larger number of different children. Therefore, we will not be using rotas in our primary schools unless the Government guidance changes.

With regard to class sizes, we have asked schools to assess the health and safety capacity of each classroom/space before deciding how many children to take, even though this may restrict the number of children that can attend the school. The health and safety assessment will be done on the basis that children could sit 2 metres from each other, although we recognise that for the youngest children this would be difficult to maintain.

While it may be possible in some schools to safely accommodate all children whose parents want them to attend, in other schools it will not. Please be prepared for the possibility that your school may not be able to reopen to some of the year groups the DfE have asked us to focus on, and understand this decision will be made with the children's safety and wellbeing at heart.

Finally, our schools may consider introducing year groups one day at a time in order to help children to adjust to the new routines that will be necessary. Your Headteacher will be considering if this is appropriate for the school and will let you know if this applies to your child's school.

Your school will be in touch very soon to explain how they will operate, the measures being put in place, which children will be returning and when, and what you will need to do when



you bring your child to school. I must stress to you that in most cases, it will not be 'business as usual' in terms of the curriculum being offered during this period. Most schools will be opening in a caring capacity, with continued support for all pupils in completing home learning.

Adjusting to another 'new normal' will be challenging for all of us and we are extremely grateful for your continued support and understanding at this unprecedented time. We will, of course, keep you up to date with any further developments as and when they arise.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "A Yarrow", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andy Yarrow
Chief Executive