

19th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

School Re-opening update for the schools in the Nene Education Trust

In my letter to you of 11th May, following the Prime Minister's announcement, I said I would update you with more information as we start to make plans for our schools to reopen. This update comes to you on behalf of both myself and the Principal at your child's school.

Thank you to those of you who completed the parent survey for children in Reception and Years 1,6,10 and 12. It has been extremely helpful to have your feedback when formulating our plans. As you may have gleaned from the press coverage so far, there are still many areas for which we are seeking further guidance from the Department for Education. Despite this we have made the following provisional "roadmap" for the reopening of our schools.

This is all underpinned with the primary aim of keeping your children and our staff safe. We are living in a situation where we are all heightened to the new risk in all our lives, but life in general is not risk free. We are planning, as far as is reasonably possible, to put controls in place in our schools to minimise the risks associated with Covid-19. However, it is worth stating that even before the days of Covid-19, life in schools was not completely risk-free.

If we consider that the risks remain too high in our schools, despite our risk management strategies, we may have to decide to keep schools or parts of schools closed until this risk can be reduced. This may be simply down to limiting numbers of children so we can maintain social distancing, or it may be caused by lack of availability of staff.

We will phase the re-opening of our schools to ensure we can manage a sustainable model. Each phase will not be rushed and will be underpinned by health and safety, and risk management plans and processes to ensure that risks are minimised. We will review each phase before moving to the next, in the light of our experience and any new guidance from the Government, based on the fluid situation regarding the outbreak of the virus and any potential future spikes in cases.

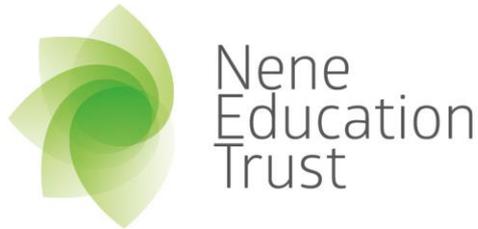
All schools **will** be fully open again in the future, but when we will be at this stage is actually unknown.

We have been working extremely hard to ensure we can do the very best we can for your child on their return to school. Our overarching plan for all schools in the Trust is as follows, further details of each phase will be set out by each school Principal at the start of June:

- The current childcare provision for children of key workers and vulnerable children will continue at Windmill and Newton Road **until Friday 5th June**, this will include during the half term holiday.

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- **From Monday 8th June**, the childcare provision will be based back in each school across the Trust.
- **From week commencing 15th June each** school will be open to specified year groups, as well as children of key workers and vulnerable children. **Schools will share their individual plans on this with parents/carers week commencing 1st June.**
- Before the end of the Summer term all children will be and offered **'reconnect transition'** visits to school.
- We anticipate, based on the current guidance, that from **September 2020** our schools will be open for all children but it will be under part-time attendance, supplemented by home learning. It is unclear when we will return to the school situation pre-Covid 19, but please be prepared for this to be many months given the uncertainties of the virus and lack of a vaccine. We know as much as you do in regard to how society and life in general will potentially return to any normality.

While we set out these plans today with you, based on the most up to date information and guidance that we have, we cannot guarantee that these initial plans will not change again in the future. On 28th May there will be a meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee of the Trust Board. They will decide if these plans that we have put forward can be rolled out. Therefore, until they make a final decision, the steps we have set out in this letter are provisional only. We also anticipate some updated Government guidance around that time which may have an impact on this too.

To confirm again, you will receive a communication directly from school outlining in detail the plans for reopening during week commencing 1st June 2020.

It goes without saying that we are immensely proud of our colleagues who have all devoted their lives and careers to the care and education of young people – we do not want to see classrooms empty for a day longer than they need to be. However, the first priority has to be the safety of everyone in the school community. We are very confident that the plans we are putting in place will enable us to start reopening our schools in the near future.

Please stay safe and continue to engage with us and we will continue to communicate with you as plans unfold.

With our warmest wishes to you and your family,

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