



Return to a Learning Community Trust School – September 2020

FAQs about School Attendance

Guidance from the Department of Education about the full opening of schools is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

- 1. Will all your schools re-open?** Yes – all of our schools re-open at the start of September. Details can be found on the individual school website and will have been communicated to you at the end of term.
- 2. Does my child have to go to school?** Yes – As of September 2020 the Department of Education has reapplied the law for all statutory school aged children. It is compulsory for your child to receive a full-time education. There is guidance available from the Department for Education (see above).
- 3. Why does my child have to go to school?** Returning to school is vital for children’s education and for their wellbeing. Time out of school is detrimental for children’s learning and development. Lower academic achievement will also affect your child in the future, when they leave school and move on to further education or employment. They may find it more difficult to secure their future if they have missed out on more education than is absolutely necessary.
- 4. What is the risk to my child?** Evidence suggests that the risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school.
- 5. Will my child be safe in school?** Yes - each school is different, but all schools are following Government guidelines on reopening schools to children.

They will also have completed a risk assessment, and this will be regularly updated by them. They will be operating in ‘bubbles’ and have enhanced cleaning arrangements. You can help by asking your child to wash their hands regularly, not touch their face, cough into their elbow, use tissues and bin after use and to do what school asks them to do to ensure their safety.

6. I have unanswered questions about my child’s day in school, such as bubbles, face masks and equipment. What should I do? Please check the school website for the most recent information or letters from the Headteacher. If you do not find the information you are looking for, please telephone the school and someone will answer your questions.

9. What if another child in the class has symptoms? Schools will be following Government guidance if this happens. The child will be sent home and asked to self-isolate. Children who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless the child tests positive, your child develops symptoms themselves or you have been requested to do so by NHS Test & Trace. Your child will be asked to wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser and the area around the person with symptoms will be cleaned with normal household disinfectant after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

10. My children have different start times – why is this? Schools are trying to reduce contact between children at particular pressure points in the day. These include drop off and collection times. Please follow the guidance that school gives you. Children will still receive a full education – school will have adjusted the timetable or start/end times to accommodate this. Schools will be asking you not to gather at the school gate. If the new times are causing problems for you, for instance if you have children in two or more different schools, please discuss with your child's schools in the first instance. We will do our best to accommodate anyone with a genuine problem in meeting the temporary start times.

11. Will I be allowed to go into my child's school? School will inform you what to do if you need to visit. It may be that you need to make an appointment. If you need to collect an ill child, you may be asked to wait outside, and staff will bring your child to you.

12. My child attends two schools or sometimes goes to an alternative provision – will this still be allowed? Yes, in most cases, although there may be some changes to arrangements. The schools or provisions will have discussed what needs to be done to reduce any risk. You can ask to be part of the risk assessment process.

13. I know of someone with Covid 19 and they are sending their child to school. What can I do? Inform school of this. School will then be able to talk to the parents to undertake a risk assessment and if there IS a confirmed case of Covid19, the child will stay at home until symptoms have passed as per Government guidelines. Parents will be instructed to keep their child at home by the school.

14. What will happen if I don't send my child to school? From September onwards, the usual rules on school attendance will apply. If your child is of compulsory school age it is a parent's duty to ensure that they attend regularly at the school where they are a registered pupil. Your child's school is responsible for recording attendance and following up pupil absence. The aim would always be to work with parents/carers to resolve any issues or concerns around attendance. However, in some cases, sanctions could be issued, including fixed penalty notices (fines), in line with local authorities' codes of conduct.

15. Can my child attend for just a few days each week? No - the guidance states that schools should not put rotas in place, and it is compulsory for your child to receive a full-time education. If your child was previously on a modified timetable for health reasons, school should have been in touch with you to discuss arrangements for the new term.

16. My child has been shielded; can I keep them off school? No – shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August, after a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of Covid19. This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. If you have concerns, you may like to talk to the consultant/paediatrician working with your child.

17. My child has a serious medical condition which has required them to be shielded, will they be safe at school? Your child's school will be following Government guidance and taking every precaution to ensure their safety. However, you may like to talk to the consultant/paediatrician working with your child for more specific information. Your school will work with you/the medical professionals to ensure any additional safety measures are put in place.

18. My child has a serious condition and the medical professionals have advised against a return to school. Will my child or I get into trouble for this? School would like the medical professionals to confirm this is the case (letter or email from the professionals). Then, and because they are complying with medical/public health advice, schools will be able to offer your child access to remote education. These activities will be monitored. Absence in this case will not be penalised.

19. Our holiday was cancelled due to Covid-19, can I take my child on holiday during the school term? Children have already missed a significant amount of education due to the pandemic. Our procedures regarding holidays in term-time remain the same, and we do not routinely authorise family holidays. If you believe you have exceptional circumstances and your child requires time off school, please complete the required form available from school. Each case will be assessed on its particular circumstances.

20. I have decided to educate my child at home until the pandemic is over. What should I do now? Please contact your child's school to discuss this further. If you or your child are anxious about returning to school, we may be able to reassure you. Elective Home Education is a big undertaking and we would want you to have all the information you need before making a decision. You can also ask for one of our Education Welfare Officers to contact you (ask your child's school for details).

21. My child is very anxious and refuses to return to school. Who can help me? Please telephone your child's school to discuss this. We have staff who can help and support your child, including pastoral staff, mentors, Education Welfare Officers and counsellors. We recognise that some children will find it difficult to return to school after such a long time and we will help and support you and your child.