



The Consortium Trust

Where together excellence and pupils thrive

Covid-19 Update 2nd March 2021

Dear Parents and carers,

I hope that you are well, as I am sure you will be aware the government has announced as expected that all pupils in all schools will return to full time, compulsory education from the 8th March. Last week I chaired a meeting of the Trust's Critical Incident Team, Academy Heads were able to also join the meeting and we are ready to welcome back all our pupils. As ever I am so grateful for the huge efforts that everyone has undertaken to ensure that the children have continued to receive support and quality provision whether that has been in the school building or in the virtual classroom. We all should be proud of what has been achieved. I am also delighted that so many parents have expressed their thanks to our amazing staff team. Thank you ☺

You will also have heard in the media that the Government has announced that families can access free Covid-19 testing kits, I would encourage you to access this important preventative measure. While the use of the lateral flow home testing kits are not compulsory I am certain that this measure will offer you and your family an additional layer of assurance. The kits will be made accessible to you from the 8th March and I understand that they will be distributed from 500 centres nationwide. Schools do not issue the kits, but as soon as I am made aware of where the collection points are I will ask schools to notify parents.

The government has also outlined their 'road-map to recovery' and I am sure like me, you are very much looking forward to a more normal time ahead. It is now time to look forward the rest of the academic year can be divided up as follows:

- Phase 1: 22nd Feb – 5th March: Pre-full opening phase.
- Phase 2: 8th - 26th March: Full opening spring term.
- Phase 3: 12th April – 20th July: Summer term.
- Phase 4: 21st July – 31st August: School closure period.

Each phase will present its own opportunities and challenges and I have outlined these below:

Phase 1: 22nd Feb – 5th March: Pre-full opening phase.

- Schools make the necessary and reasonable adjustments in preparation to welcome all pupils back.
- We are updating risk assessments and very much looking forward to seeing all our pupils again.

Phase 2: 8th - 26th March: Full opening spring term.

- All children are to return to full time, compulsory education from the 8th March, I am very aware that some parents may remain anxious about the return to school. I am unable to do anything other than follow government guidance and I acknowledge that school is the best place for children to learn. The whole Trust believes that we must regain your trust and work with you to ensure that anxieties are addressed and all are supported and not forced to attend school. The Trust's inclusion team will be working with families that remain concerned and during these weeks we hope that everyone will have made full transition back into education.
- Digital teaching is paused (with a few individual exceptions) learning will be focussed in the classroom.
- Teaching and learning will again focus on social, emotional and well-being, creating the environment for positive learning attitudes and behaviours. Building up resilience and supporting a full curriculum offer.
- Schools will close for the Easter holiday – there will be no holiday school provision.

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Phase 3: 12th April – 20th July: Summer term.

- It is hoped that schools will operate as close to normal as possible.
- Teaching and learning will be focused on a broad and balanced curriculum.
- There is no statutory testing this year, but teachers will assess pupils and this information will be shared with parents.
- Risk assessments will be reviewed at the beginning of term to reflect the wider opportunities and freedoms.
- Extended school provision will be rolled out again, including breakfast club and afterschool clubs.
- School half term is the 31st May to the 4th June.
- All national Covid-19 restrictions are planned to be removed on the 21st June (tbc)
- Subject to restrictions being lifted from the 21st June, parents will be permitted into schools again.
- Events i.e. plays, sports days, Leavers' assemblies can be planned. Educational visits, off site learning including the use of transport will be permitted.
- Residential activities may be considered subject to robust measures in place including financial security of the visit should it need to be cancelled at short notice.
- Schools and settings will confirm any local arrangements as soon as possible.
- Last day of term for pupils will be Friday 16th July.

Phase 4: 21st July – 31st August: School closure period.

- School closure period from the 21st July – 31st August, Kirkley Nursery and Central Office to operate as normal.
- Summer school provision **may** be provided on some sites where there is a need (more information to follow).

The new academic year 2021/22 will start on the 1st September with a staff training day and children will return on the 2nd September.

It should be noted that the further we get away from 'today' the more difficult it is to plan with certainty, the above phase descriptors are subject to change at any point and must be treated with optimistic caution. I am sure that like me you are keen to engage once again in the unfettered enjoyment of travel, seeing friends and caring for family. We have truly come through a year like no other, I hope one never to be repeated. I am immensely proud of the Trust's collective achievements and that includes the invaluable and very welcome support from our families and wider community. Thank you again and take care.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne
CEO & Principal