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Dear Families,

Please find below a series of Frequently Asked Questions for parents following on from our mailing yesterday regarding the reopening of our academies.

Please note important change: children will be able to bring water bottles to school and will take them home each evening for thorough washing.

Reopening of Academies – June 2020 **Frequently asked questions for parents**

When will my child be able to return to school?

In accordance with Government guidance, all schools will be reopening on 1st June. In the first instance, this will be for the children of Critical Workers and our vulnerable families. After that, we will be gradually opening our provision for children in the Early Years, Year 1 and Year 6. Other year groups may follow. We will be reviewing our facilities and advising you of the arrangements for your child when that becomes appropriate.

What is a bubble?

A bubble is a small group which will remain together whilst at school. This is part of the organisation that we are required to put in place. There will not be any more than 15 children in any one group. In some cases, there may be fewer. The 'bubble' children and adults will be together for the whole day and will not mix with other bubbles.

Will siblings be in the same bubble?

The organisation of bubbles will be worked out by the Head Teacher of your academy. It is unlikely that siblings will be together (unless they are twins!) as we are trying to keep year groups together. The emphasis is now on learning rather than childcare. Teachers will be planning lessons for each year group. The only exception to this would be if the children are in one of the mixed age 5 day a week critical worker children bubbles.

How will you ensure social distancing between children?

Children will be taught in smaller groups than usual – a bubble. These groups will not mix, including at break and lunch times. They will remain with particular adults who will be part of that bubble. We will endeavour to promote appropriate social distancing but cannot guarantee that children will not come closer to an adult or another child than the social distancing rules.

What measures are in place to protect my child?

We have undertaken rigorous risk assessments for each site and additional measures and procedures are now in place. We have received the risk assessments from our cleaning companies and caterers which specify the guidance that they will be working to.



Is it still childcare for Critical Worker children?

No. Schools are now reopening for teaching and learning. This will be subject to ongoing review.

Why are Critical Worker children in full time?

This is to aid the organisation of the 'bubbles' and staffing. We appreciate that there are concerns about some children being in for longer hours, but this is because schools are now asked to re-open and the focus is on learning and not on childcare.

Do critical worker children HAVE to come in everyday?

Yes. The organisation of the provision means that we need to know that the groups are the same each day (except for children who may be absent in the usual way). There is now a focus on education rather than childcare.

Do I need to book my childcare using the childcare@ email address?

No this will be shut down over half term because the individual academies will know if you have asked for the space after half term. We have asked you to opt for 5 days or 4.5 days and this will continue over the next half term.

Can I send in my child part time?

No. Schools are reopening in order to provide education and learning for increasing numbers of children. Part time will not be possible due to the complex organisation and risk assessments that we have had to put in place. Arrangements for the timings for your child's bubble will be sent out and we ask that you ensure that you adhere to the drop off and collection times given.

What happens if my child cannot come in on one day?

If your child is expected in school, you will need to phone the school and give reasons for the absence. This is in line with what you have had to do in the past.

I have 2 children, one who falls into the year groups being considered and the other who doesn't. Can they both come in?

No. We need to comply with the guidance which states which year groups are the priority.

My child is asthmatic and I am not comfortable sending him into school. My husband is a key worker. What do I do?

If you don't feel happy sending your child to school then you must decide if you want to support him with learning at home. You are not obliged to take up the offer for critical workers.

My child has an EHCP...do they have to come in if it is working well at home?

The advice is that they should be back at school but if you are confident that this is working for your child we cannot insist. It would be best to talk to the school inclusion leader about your specific circumstances

If I choose to keep my child at home will teachers still support us with home learning?

Full time planning and teaching workloads for staff mean that if you choose to keep your child at home, personalised contact with a class teacher will reduce. Learning from home may become more challenging once your child's year group returns as the learning will be planned for delivery within the classroom.

Staff supporting learning with families who remain at home will prioritise those who are shielding and those whose year groups are not yet back in school.

Will I be able to book my child in once I have been called back to work?

We have restricted spaces because of the guidelines on halving the class numbers to work as a bubble and the physical space available. As long as your child is eligible, you can request a space and this will be available, **if we have not reached capacity.**

Will I be penalised for not sending my child to school?

At present, no.

Does my child have to attend in the holidays?

No

Why has it all changed? Why are there so many restrictions which have not been in place before?

The government guidance has changed now that we are being asked to take more children back into school with an emphasis on learning rather than childcare. There will be more children and staff accessing the buildings and the guidance is there to protect everyone from spreading the virus.

What can I send in from home?

Only limited items can be brought in from home. This is to restrict the risk of any cross-infection.

Your child may bring in a packed lunch if required and a named water bottle. Pens, pencils etc will be provided by the school. **Do not send in any pencil cases.**

Wraparound childcare?

Unfortunately, we are not able to offer any extended hours at the present, due to the Government guidelines. Children cannot move from one bubble to another within the school environment. This will be under constant review. We would urge parents to follow guidance for households outside of school to ensure that the rigorous bubble processes in school are as safe as they can be.

Why is the provision different in some local schools?

Each school has its own context which include the demand for places, staff availability and the school environment. We have been working with all local heads to make the offer similar. In a few Junior schools, Year 6 is being prioritised as it is the only year group currently expected to be in school.

Water bottles

Please note change to previous information letter:

Children should bring a named water bottle each day which will be brought home for you to clean thoroughly.

What about vulnerable children and families?

Any child or member of staff who is living with someone classed as 'clinically extremely vulnerable' should only attend school if strict social distancing can be achieved. *We cannot guarantee this.* Any child or member of staff who is living with someone classed as 'clinically vulnerable' should attend school. #

In some schools children are being told not to wear uniform at all, so that children wear fresh clothes daily (may be difficult to wash/dry uniform overnight). Does this apply to Kite schools?

We are adopting a flexible approach since some parents prefer to use school sweatshirts and others prefer not. You may choose to wash your child's clothes each evening which would mean you have insufficient uniform.

DfE guidance states: 'There is no need for anything other than normal personal hygiene and washing of clothes following a day in a school. Uniform that cannot be machine washed should be avoided.'

Yours sincerely



Christine Dickinson

CEO The Kite Academy Trust