



Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

www.midsomernortonschoolspartnership.com

Executive Headteacher/CEO: Alun Williams

Registered Address: Norton Hill School, Charlton Road, Midsomer Norton, BA3 4AD

Company No: 7365778

27th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I know MNSP schools will have written to you last week about their arrangements for the possible re-opening of schools on June 1st. The Government have now told us that they will make a final decision about re-opening on 28th May. I am sure you will agree that this is very short notice. However, the MNSP primary schools have spent a number of weeks planning for re-opening and can if required, meet the 1st June date. Secondary schools were hoping to welcome back some Year 10 and 12 students on the 1st June, but we have now been told by the Government that we should, for the first 2 weeks of term, continue to work with vulnerable pupils and those from key frontline workers. Secondary Schools will be working to welcome back a number of students in Years 10 & 12 to support them with their home learning from the 15th June. The guidance for secondary schools suggests that pupils in years 7-9 will continue to receive remote learning tasks until the end of this academic year. Headteachers will be in contact with parents/carers of Year 10 and 12 cohorts to help support them with their studies prior to the summer break and determine how the face-to-face learning might begin from 15th June for some children.

All schools have detailed risk assessments in place, which you can find on each individual school websites. Staff, Unions, Health and Safety colleagues, Governors and Trustees have viewed the risk assessments and we believe they are as robust as they can be and should enable schools to minimise risk as much as possible. Clearly, risk cannot be eradicated, but we have put in place strong measures to try and ensure the best possible safety for staff and children. We will continue to update the risk assessments as we receive more information from those that provide us with advice and guidance.

All schools have received the PPE they have requested including masks, visors, aprons, additional soap, sanitiser and gloves. Additionally, we have built from our own resources, 130 sanitiser stations which are being deployed to schools to support good hygiene. Cleaning in many schools is also being altered so that all staff have access to cleaning materials and our cleaning staff are changing rotas where needed, so that day-time cleaning can be undertaken.

Primary schools will continue over the coming days and weeks to make contact with parents/carers to determine whether their children will return to school. In order to plan for changes in numbers, we will be asking parents to give schools a week long period of notice that they would like their child to return. If you have indicated in a recent survey that you are 'not sure' or 'will not' be sending your child back to their primary school, then you will need to notify the Headteacher of your school on 1st June if you would like your child to be in school from 8th June and so on. **This applies also to the children of key frontline workers.** This is necessary so that arrangements can be made for changes to classroom layouts, staffing levels, etc. We would also like to be clear that if numbers in schools rise to a point where we can no longer meet social distancing requirements, or staffing is insufficient to ensure safety, we may not be able to accept all children requiring a place. At this point we may decide to use secondary school sites to relieve pressure on space in the primary school buildings.

As risk assessments will show, we are using defined groups or 'bubbles' to organise groups of children in primary school settings. This reduces the likely spread of any virus cases and cross-contamination. If your child develops the common symptoms of Coronavirus, they will be isolated until you are able to collect them and staff will be using PPE equipment whilst supporting them in isolation. Parents/Carers **must** then arrange for testing to be carried out and **must** notify the school as soon as possible of the result. Other pupils and staff in the same 'bubble' will not be





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required to isolate until the school has been notified that a suspected case has tested positive. At that point, all staff and pupils in the 'bubble' will need to isolate for 14 days. The school will notify parents/carers formally **only** if a positive test result has been received.

We are hoping to step up the level of face-to-face communication with secondary-aged children and begin posting more video material for pupils. This is proving difficult, as we are still subject to all safeguarding legislation and must ensure anything related to live video in particular, or live video calls, is safe for children and staff.

In primary schools, we have assembled a team to set work centrally for Years 2-5. Schools may choose to supplement this work with their own learning tasks. We have decided to set work centrally so that we can lift pressure from staff who will be required in school to make social distancing possible for nursery provision, Year R, Year 1 and Year 6. You will notice that there is less feedback for children on their work too, particularly as we find our way in schools with these new systems and ways of working. As a reminder, we are not intending to set home learning for Year R, 1 and 6 classes once these children can return to school, unless your child is required to shield.

Finally, thank you for your understanding and patience with all colleagues and schools in the Trust. It has been a challenging time responding to thousands of pages of guidance which is updated and altered regularly.

Yours sincerely

Alun Williams
CEO

