



Community Inclusive Trust

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Our ref: SH

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Dear Parents/Carers

As the Chair of Community Inclusive Trust and on behalf of the Trustees, I would like to begin this letter by saying a huge thank you to all parents/carers for your continued support during these unprecedented times. I am sure that you have seen the news regarding the possible return to school for non-key workers' children in Nursery, EYFS (Reception), Year 1, Year 6 and also to increase pupil numbers attending Special schools.

The re-opening of schools is contingent on the Government's five main factors being met (NHS capacity, a falling rate of daily deaths, a rate of infection below 1, sufficient PPE and no risk of a second spike overwhelming the NHS) and also on the CIT Trust Board's view that all reasonable steps have been taken by Trust leaders to ensure that each school site is safe for staff and pupils. The current information from the Government is that they will make a decision and announcement regarding schools opening more widely on 28 May at the afternoon briefing. If your child is not currently attending school, please check their school's website for information on 28 May.

Whilst we are not yet in the position to decide if CIT schools will open more widely from 1 June, I want to take the opportunity to explain some of the challenges that each of our Mainstream and Special schools may face and the arrangements we are preparing to put into place as we seek to ensure that each school is as safe as possible by following the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

Whilst we will endeavour to ensure safety and consistency of approach, CIT's Trust Board feels it is important that, as parents and carers, you are made aware of the potential changes and issues that may occur as we seek to facilitate increased numbers of pupils being able to attend school.

The following is a list of important points that I would like you to be aware of:

- Whilst the Government is aiming for schools to open the doors to EYFS, Year 1, Year 6 and increased numbers in our Special schools, this is only an expectation and is not statutory.
- From 1 June not all pupils within the year groups named in Primary schools will be able to attend and we will increase numbers as we deem it is safe to do so. The Special schools also intend to gradually increase pupil numbers attending from 1 June, with the safety of the pupils being the limiting factor.

A Multi Academy Trust for:

GANF - Ambergate Sports College | GANF - Sandon School | Isaac Newton Primary School
SSS - The Garth School | SSS - The Priory School | The John Fielding Special School
Woodlands Academy | Poplar Farm Primary School | Caythorpe Primary School
Chapel St Leonards Primary School | Greenfields Academy | St Paul's Community Primary School and Nursery | LEARN Teaching School Alliance



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- I am sure you will appreciate that keeping pupils safe is influenced significantly by staffing levels, so the numbers of pupils the Trust can safely accommodate may change on a daily basis. Individual schools will endeavour to keep opening patterns as consistent as possible, as well as ensuring any changes are communicated to you as soon as possible.
- Over time the Trust aims to increase numbers of pupils in school as protocols are tested to minimise the risk within school as much as is possible.
- The Government guidance states that Primary schools cannot expect to maintain the two metre distance that has been the cornerstone of social distancing and this may also be difficult in our Special schools. Whilst each school will do all it can to minimise contact between pupils, it will not be possible to prevent this completely. We will do all that we can to keep safe distances and for pupils to remain within a consistent group of pupils and staff. These groupings will be called “bubbles” and within primaries be no more than 15 pupils.
- In order to achieve groups of 15 or less whilst maintaining the provision for children of key workers, we will be using all available staff. Unfortunately, should the leader of the bubble have to go into isolation or be off work due to illness, then we will not be able to provide cover. At this point that group may not be able to attend unless we are as confident as possible that we can maintain a low level of risk.
- Each school will be adding an Appendix to its Behaviour Policy. During this time, we will not be able to allow pupils into school if they spit, scratch, bite or display behaviours that require positive handling. As a Trust we are determined to minimise the risk to both pupils and staff.
- The school day is unlikely to have the same timings as you are used to. In order to minimise the risk of transmission, start and end times will be staggered. This may result in the younger age groups having a much shorter day than you are used to. At this stage this is the safest course of action, as trying to maintain distances over a full school day will mean that we are not as active as we would like to be.
- We will have specific start and end of day procedures where parents and carers must follow the rules in terms of distancing. Should any parent or carer breach these rules then we reserve the right to ban you from the school site. We would hate for this to happen.
- Under Lincolnshire County Council advice parents/carers of Special school pupils are asked to provide their own transport and we ask that they wait in their vehicle until their child is collected by school staff.
- Within CIT’s Primary schools, keyworkers and vulnerable children in EYFS, Years and Year 6 will be placed in their year group bubbles in line with Government guidance. Key worker and vulnerable children in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be in a separate bubble of no more than 15 pupils. This means that the timings of the day will change for those vulnerable and keyworker children in EYFS, Years 1 and 6. Unfortunately we cannot find a work around for this whilst also meeting the Government guidance.
- Children who are defined as “Clinically Extremely Vulnerable” in writing from their GP or NHS should not attend school until they are informed otherwise by health professionals. Parents/carers of “Clinically Vulnerable” as per the Government definition should notify school and the pupil will only be allowed to attend school if both school and parents/carers feel that the risk can be reduced to an acceptable level, as we cannot guarantee social distancing throughout the day. Our aim is to integrate our most vulnerable children back into school as soon as it is safe to do so, in line with Government guidelines.
- The way in which work for home learning has been set so far will unfortunately have to change. We will no longer have staff available for this, as we are expecting the vast majority of teaching staff will now be in school each day.

Whilst these measures may cause concern and worry, I can assure you that the Head Teachers of each of our schools are doing an amazing job. The decision to open our schools more widely is not without risk, but is one that we are calculating carefully. We also recognise that currently there is no statutory requirement for pupils to attend school

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and in deciding to send your child back to school you are taking a risk that we need to mitigate for you as thoroughly and robustly as possible.

The Trust Board is ensuring that before each school is allowed to open more widely as the Government is expecting, a thorough and detailed risk assessment has been undertaken and arrangements are in place to remove or minimise all risks.

The Head Teacher of your child's school will contact all parents with the details of the specific 'opening more widely' arrangements. Please also contact the Head Teacher with any concerns, etc. that that you may have so that these can be managed for you as effectively as possible.

Each of the Trust's schools has stayed open to key worker and vulnerable pupils in line with the guidance and, as such, each school has been open as required (for most, each week day) during the lockdown.

In order to ensure that staff can plan and recuperate, we will be closing each of our schools during half term. Many staff have not had a day off since the lockdown began and we do not want to risk re-opening these year groups with staff who are not at their best. Ensuring that schools are closed during half term will help to ensure that this is the case.

Finally, I'd like to thank you all again for your continued support. The school staff really appreciate it in what has been, and will continue to be, a difficult situation. I would like to reiterate my appreciation for the amazing job that all staff have been doing and thank them publically for their commitment to your children. I am sure you share my appreciation of the dedicated teams at each of your schools and work with them to ensure all stay as safe as possible in these unprecedented times.

Stay safe.



Dr Stephen Hopkins
Chair of Board of Trustees - CIT

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