

14th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you because your child is a pupil at a school in the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (ODST). You will be aware the government has announced proposals for the phased return of some children to school from 1st June at the earliest. This letter contains information about ODST's response to the government's guidelines and the approach that we are asking your child's school to take.

ODST is very proud of our family of 37 schools in Oxfordshire and historic Berkshire. Each school is unique and we are a multi academy trust which devolves a lot of responsibility for decision-making to our fantastic headteachers and the local governing bodies which oversee each school. We firmly believe that this approach is in the best interests of delivering an excellent education to your children.

We want as many children as possible to be in school as soon as possible; we exist as an organisation to educate children and young people. We do, however, take very seriously our responsibility to keep your children safe, and to ensure that our staff can be confident to come to work knowing that we are not putting them at undue risk during this time of crisis.

I have therefore asked your school's headteacher and local governing body to carry out a full and detailed risk assessment, working with trust central staff, to ensure that the decisions we make about opening to more pupils from the anticipated/proposed opening date are in the best interests of children and members of staff. The specific conditions in your child's school will need to be carefully considered and a number of issues could have implications with regards to the way in which each individual school decides to re-open. For example, numbers of pupils returning, size of classrooms and number of staff who are able to work could all make an impact on local decision making. Also, it is highly likely that schools will need to consider changes to timings of the school day, lunch arrangements, and arrangements for picking up and dropping off children. **The first such decision is that 1st and 2nd June have been designated as additional INSET days, to enable staff to receive appropriate guidance and training, prior to opening for larger numbers of pupils.**

Although your school's headteacher is unlikely to be in a position to tell you at this stage exactly what the arrangements will be after 2nd June, and whilst I realise that this may be frustrating, we are all working very hard to put this into place as quickly as possible, and I trust you will understand the safety of the children and adults on the school site must come first.

If, after careful consideration, we do not feel that it will be possible to open your child's school in exactly the way that government communication suggests, we will let you know what our plans are.

We expect to be in a position to give you clear and detailed information by the end of next week; rest assured we will take all necessary steps to ensure the safety of your child if we invite them into school, and for those children still at home, that we will continue to provide home learning.

Yours sincerely



Anne Dellar
Chief Executive - Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust