

ALEC REED ACADEMY



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Principal and CEO: Allison Moise-Dixon

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Dear Parents / Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you and your families safe and well. If anyone had told us that we would be experiencing what we currently are six months ago, I don't think any of us would have believed it. Yet, here we are, all trying to adapt to a very strange 'new normal' as we begin the government's transition out of lockdown. Further to my last letter and all that you have seen in the news, you will know that the Government has announced the potential re-opening of schools from June 1st at the earliest.

The Prime Minister stated that if the threat of Coronavirus is reduced further primary schools could begin to reopen in smaller groups from June 1st for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. Further updates suggested the inclusion of nursery children also.

More information here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcaresettings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/actions-for-education-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>

It is possible that whilst for some of you, this may be welcome news, I am aware that for others this will be a source of worry and anxiety. As educators we are keen to welcome our children and young people back into the academy. However, we are committed to ensuring that this is done as cautiously, thoughtfully and safely as possible. We want our children, young people and staff to return when we are confident that the way in which we return is safe for all. That is why we have been carefully planning your child's return.

As an academy community we have relied on each other. I would like to take this opportunity to thank again our staff who have been working hard to set appropriate online learning for your child from nursery to sixth form. We have also had staff in the academy throughout lockdown supporting our most vulnerable students and those who are the children of key workers. In addition, staff have volunteered their time during the traditional school holiday breaks. I also send my genuine thanks to you, parents and carers, for persisting in trying to engage your child with their learning even when it has been difficult. Your efforts have been so appreciated! We are so proud of the work that many of our students have produced during lockdown. We recognise that it has been far from easy. We are mindful of the impact that lockdown has had on our families and particularly in this week, mental health awareness week, understand that our children's safety and positive mental health is paramount.

Therefore, I wish to share with you the plan that we have for re-opening the academy (please see document attached). The academy plans to reopen to wider groups of students including nursery, reception, year 1, year 6, year 10 and 12 in a phased way from Monday 15th June. We remain closed to all other students apart from those who are the children of key workers or are our most vulnerable children. The attached overview aims to show you how we intend to open the academy in a phased way. Through dramatically reduced numbers on site, this should enable us to safely manage the return of your child. This will help us to ensure that social distancing and hygiene measures can successfully be put in place in order to protect the wider academy community.

'The Collins PiXL Award for Outstanding Progress' National Award Winners 2014



Attendance to the academy

We are not going to be pressuring anyone to send their children to school. You know your children and personal situation best. There will be no fines, no referrals. We will keep you updated with all our preparations, so you can make an informed decision. Thank you to parents who have completed our snapshot survey about sending children in.

More specifically on attendance:

- If your child or anyone in your household has [symptoms of coronavirus](#) everyone must self-isolate and not come in. [School children will be eligible for testing](#) and you should take medical advice by calling 111
- If your child is [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) they must maintain strict social distancing and they must not come in. If your child lives with someone in this category they must not come in.
- If your child is [clinically vulnerable](#) they must not come in. If someone in your household falls into this category please seek medical advice about whether it is safe to send your child in.

Principles of our approach

Below, we have set out the principles we are employing in the re-opening phase. It is important to note that we cannot give guarantees about safety. However, we believe that the risk assessment that we have in place helps us to mitigate possible risks. As the Government has acknowledged in their guidance younger children cannot socially distance and whilst we will put in place as many safety measures as we can, parents and carers will have to assess what is in the best interests of their child.

1. A gradual and phased return

Given the unprecedented nature of this situation and our commitment to keeping the academy and wider community safe, we think it is right to go slowly into a phased return so that we can ensure our measures have capacity at each stage. We need to review everything regularly, keeping staff, children and young people safe.

In practice this means:

- No additional students will be on site on the 1st of June. We will only continue to welcome the children of key workers and our most vulnerable children and young people. This delay to opening will ensure that robust plans are in place to welcome your child back to the academy in a phased way from the 15th June. Confirmation of how your child will return will be sent to you directly depending on the year group to which your child belongs.
- From the 15th June, nursery, reception, year 1, year 6, year 10 and year 12 will be invited into the academy for a timed part of the day. You will be written to by the end of the 8th June to confirm the arrangements for your child and the contact that they will have with the academy. Online learning will still be in place for children and young people when they are not in the academy. We will review our programme at the end of the two-week cycle.
- From the 29th June, we would hope to be in the position to offer, subject to review, a wider curriculum offer to our children and young people.

2. Outside is better than inside

Our understanding is that the virus is less likely to be passed on outside. So in practice, this means that where possible children will learn/play outside (so you may need to send them in with coats or sun hats and have applied sun cream).

3. We will work in 'families' - limiting contact

In practice this means:

- Classes will be no more than 12 with one teacher and one member of support staff where possible in primary. In secondary, the ratio is likely to be 1:10 teacher: young person. This may be your child's class teacher but it may also be a different allocated member of staff
- These 'families' will be kept separate from others for the whole day - including staggered lunch and break. Within the 'family,' we will try to limit physical interaction between children as much as possible

- Where a child or adult has Covid-19 symptoms the 'family' will be asked to self-isolate. If there is a confirmed case the 'family' will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days

4. We will follow protective measures

In practice this means (this is not an exhaustive list):

- 2 metre distancing lines as children and young people enter the academy
- Regular hand washing including: on entry, before and after break and lunch, before exiting the academy
- Hand sanitiser available in all classrooms
- Parents separated for staggered pick and drop-offs and no entrance beyond the school gate in primary (one parent only for pick up and drop off)
- Respiratory hygiene reinforced 'catch it, bin it, kill it' and then wash hands
- Regular cleaning of key, well-used surfaces and areas
- Reduction in resources in rooms

Online learning

Online learning and email and telephone communications with families will be continuing in the same form for the moment for all the year groups that are not attending the academy. We will be communicating shortly about how this will change in the future.

Next steps

Should you have any further questions about the overview that I have provided or indeed the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact your child's SAFE Worker in the first instance.

Our overriding principle over the next few weeks is the well-being of everyone. We will pause our reopening plans if we feel we cannot follow the government guidance and/or our own safety protocols.

With every best wish to you and you families

Mrs A. Moise-Dixon
Principal and CEO