

09 June 2020



Dear Parents and Carers,

Plans for the re-opening of Oasis Academy MediaCityUK

Further to my message to you last week, I am pleased to be writing to you today with further details on the preparations we are making for the gradual return of our Year 10 students from next week. As a team, we are keen to safely welcome your child back to school.

The Government and medical advisors consider the situation with the coronavirus to be improving and would like Year 10 students to return for some face-to-face support. This is in addition to our students who are able to attend now (those whose parents are key workers or are otherwise eligible for additional support).

As I shared in my previous message, the Government's guidance is as follows:

"From 15 June, secondary schools are able to offer face-to-face support for a quarter of the year 10 and 12 cohort at any one time. Alongside this the government is asking secondary schools to:

- continue providing full-time provision for eligible young people and for children of critical workers. This provision is for pupils in all year groups (including year 10 and year 12)*
- provide some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of year 10 & year 12 pupils, with an expectation that remote education will continue to be the predominant form of education delivery for these year groups and that this should be of high quality*
- continue to use best endeavours to support all other pupils remaining at home, making use of the available remote education support and ensuring a high-quality offer"*

Our commitment to safety

Our number one priority is the safety of your child, your family and of our staff. We have worked hard to ensure that we meet the Government guidelines for reopening and in some places we are pleased to say that we exceed those guidelines. Since the lock down began, we have remained open to provide childcare for the children of key workers and other eligible students and in doing so we have demonstrated therefore that with care and sensible planning and strong teamwork, your child is safe in our care.

We are only able to re-open the academy for those Year 10 students not currently attending **if** the Government and the medical experts continue to confirm that it is safe to do. Should the Public Health Authority indicate otherwise (with any change in the R factor) we will take immediate action to close the academy.

The details below set out the arrangements we have put in place to ensure as high a degree of safety as possible.



Principal - Marie Dillon

King William Street, Salford Quays, Salford, M50 3UQ

Tel: 0161 886 6500 Fax: 0161 886 6549

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What are the arrangements for your child

As you will see from the above guidance, we are also only allowed to open to Year 10 on a rota basis at this stage, with a maximum of a quarter of the year group in at any one time.

With this in mind, we are inviting your child to attend school on one day a week, every week until the end of the summer term from 15 June 2020. There will be a text sent to you informing you of the specific day your child needs to attend each week. This will also be followed up by a phone call with a member of staff from the academy. The day allocated has been carefully chosen considering teaching arrangements and the needs of every student.

Week commencing 15 June will be dedicated to holding one-to-one meetings between a member of the academy leadership team and your child. This will provide the opportunity to discuss the structure and routines going forward and a chance for your child to ask any questions they may have. From 22 June, the school day will run from 08:45 – 14:25/30 and your child will have a dedicated day each week to attend the academy where a timetable will be provided.

Questions and feedback

I know that you will have many questions about returning to school and about how things will work in this 'new normal' environment. We understand that you will need to feel confident about the arrangements. To help address some of these questions I have provided a frequently asked questions document with this letter. If you have further questions or concerns you would like addressed, please contact us at info@oasismediacityuk.org.

We will also be providing a short video showing the arrangements we have made in the Academy later this week on the website and on our normal social media channels.

We will keep all aspects of our school preparations under review and will always seek to take on board your feedback.

What do I need to do now?

There is a lot of information here, but I wanted you to have the full detail of what we are doing to make the Academy safe and welcoming for our students. While it will be a little different to normal, we will of course take the time to ensure all of our young people understand the changes when we welcome them back.

Thank you as ever for your patience and understanding during this time, and the support you are showing the team who are working exceptionally hard to do all they can for the students.

Yours sincerely,

Marie Dillon
Principal



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Details about our arrangements

1) The 2m rule and student numbers

We will be implementing the **2 metre** social distancing rule everywhere for everyone. In addition to this, all classrooms have been organised to ensure **3 metre** social distancing is in place. We have completed a careful evaluation of the space and our staff capacity and we will be using two large, well ventilated spaces for teaching purposes; the auditorium and the PE open space.

Adhering to the government guidance of no more than a quarter of students accessing the building at one time, students will be taught in a 'bubble' of no more than 13 students. Therefore, the maximum number of Year 10 students in the building will be 26, split into two separate 'bubbles'. Students in each 'bubble' will not mix at any point throughout the school day.

2) Drop-off, pick up and communication through the day

As you can imagine, entering and exiting the academy poses a challenge for managing social distancing for our students. Being outside does significantly reduce the risk but we will be asking students to access the Academy only via King William Street. There will be social distancing signage along King William Street and we ask that all students follow the guidelines and remain 2 metres apart at all times. There will be sanitiser to use upon arrival at the gate.

On the day which they have been allocated, students will be asked to arrive for 08:45. Students will be finishing school between 14:25 and 14:30.

During the day, we ask that parents communicate with us only via telephone on 0161 886 6500. To reduce any risk further, parents and all other external visitors to the Academy will not be allowed onto school premises for the time being.

3) Temperature Testing and Testing for the coronavirus

While it is not a requirement, each student will have a temperature check with a thermal (non-contact) thermometer upon arrival. If any student has a temperature we will ask them to return home to reduce the risk of any transmission of the virus. Please be assured that staff will be undergoing the same checks.

If you think your child is displaying symptoms of the virus it would be helpful to get them tested. You can do so by checking for the nearest centre here (<https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test>). If they are positive we depend on you to alert us at the soonest possible moment so that we can advise others who have potentially been in contact, and take the necessary steps to isolate students and staff.

4) Risk Assessments



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We have completed a thorough risk assessment following guidance from the Government and detailed guidelines from the Oasis Community Learning Trust. You can read the Government's guidance by searching for 'Opening schools guidance for parents.'

We have reviewed every procedure in the school in the light of the virus including how we will set out classrooms, the use of PPE by staff, how to manage drop-off and pick up, the use of temperature checks, how the students will have access to hand washing, how they will move around the Academy safely and many more issues.

The risk assessment will be signed off by the Oasis national leadership team along with myself as Principal and will remain under constant review as we monitor our progress and as the country's situation changes.

5) Social Distancing

As indicated above, we have created social distancing routes around the Academy and we have rearranged classrooms to meet requirements for social distancing. We have prioritised the use of classrooms with sinks, or nearby to washing facilities. Students will be placed into a 'bubble' with two members of staff leading lessons for the full day. They will remain in one teaching space for the day and will have a separate building entrance, toilet and hand-washing facilities to the other 'bubble' of students in the academy.

With this in mind, we will be developing strict routines for the students to follow and we have kept the ratios of students to staff very low. In order to reduce opportunities for transmission, we will keep them in small groups which will remain the same throughout the time they are in school. They will stay in one classroom with limited movement around the Academy. If they use any equipment it will be washed down afterwards and before it is allowed to be used by others.

6) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

We have a stock of PPE within the Academy, including face-masks, disposable gloves, disposable aprons, hand sanitisers and soap. While we are not expecting to have any shortages of PPE, we will only remain open if we have enough equipment.

Please note that from the 15 June it will be mandatory for all users of public transport (with the exception of young children and disabled people) to wear face masks - see point 8 below. The latest Government guidance, however, is that wearing a face mask in schools is not recommended; effective cleaning, excellent hygiene and developing new routines are deemed the most effective way to control the spread of the virus. Notwithstanding, we have agreed that should you wish your child to wear one they may do so. This is the same for staff.



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7) Uniform

In order to take every opportunity to limit any spread of the virus we respectfully recommend that you wash your child's clothes which they have worn to school at the end of every day.

Students will be expected to wear the following uniform:

- Shirt
- Skirt/trousers
- Black footwear

They will not be required to wear the academy tie, blazer, jumper or lanyard. Students may need to wear a coat to and from the academy but will be expected to take this off and place this on their chair throughout the day. Students should not bring any other personal items of clothing with them and must follow the uniform guidelines above.

8) Hygiene

We have increased cleaning across the Academy, with a focus on regularly wiping down door handles and hard surfaces. There will be disinfectant sprays and paper for cleaning purposes in each classroom. The Academy will be thoroughly cleaned each day and will have been thoroughly cleaned before each group of students arrive. We have established routines for hand washing on coming into and leaving the Academy, and also before and after breaks. There are hand sanitizers around the Academy.

9) Getting to and from school

The Government continues to advise that students should try to avoid public transport especially at peak times and, where possible, travel to and from the Academy by walking or cycling. We know that this will not always be possible, so please let us know any concerns around this.

The Government has also announced that wearing face coverings will become a requirement for using public transport from 15 June, and they have shared advice for people on how to make their own face coverings at home, using scarves or other textile items (you can read this advice by searching 'how to wear and make a cloth face covering'.)

These face coverings should cover the mouth and nose while allowing the wearer to breathe comfortably and can be as simple as a scarf or bandana that ties behind the head to give a snug fit. Please note that face coverings are not the same as face masks, and it is important that medical grade PPE masks remain available for frontline staff.

If you have not already done so, can I ask that you respond to the text message asking how your child will travel to and from school.



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10) Equipment

Please do not allow students to bring any equipment into school including any school bags. See the next paragraph about school lunches.

Each student will have their own tray for their work which will include a pencil case with equipment provided by the academy, as well as folders, paper and personalised revision textbooks that will not be used by any other student.

The academy will also be providing each student with a bottle of water each day they attend the academy. Therefore, please do not send your child into the academy with their own water bottles as they will be asked to dispose of these on arrival.

11) School lunches

All students who are able to attend school will be provided with a free school lunch. Therefore, there is no need to bring food into the Academy.

Students will have their food and drinks brought to them, and a pre-order system will be in place for break and lunch. Students will be expected to eat their lunch in their classroom before having some time outdoors.

If you are eligible for the Government's food voucher scheme, run by Edenred, then you will continue to receive a voucher in the usual way even if your child attends the academy and receives a meal there. We will update you if these arrangements change.

12) Curriculum planning and online learning

Online learning will continue for all students.

Staff at the academy have carefully planned the timetable for the day each week your child will attend the academy. To begin with, there will be a strong focus on mental health and wellbeing and careers education and guidance, in addition to the academic curriculum.



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Frequently asked questions and the latest advice from the Government

I know that you will have many questions about returning to school; I have copied some of the [Government's latest advice](#) which I hope will address some of the most frequent questions. You can read the Government's advice by searching 'reopening schools information for parents.'

Can my child return to school?

From the 15 June, we are asking secondary schools and sixth forms to begin offering some face-to-face support to year 10 and 12 pupils to supplement their remote education, which should remain their predominant mode of education during this term

This approach aims to limit numbers within schools and further education settings while ensuring that the young people who can benefit from attending most are able to do so.

How will risks to children, teachers and families be managed?

We have provided guidance and support to schools, colleges and childcare settings on implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings to help them to reduce the risk of transmission as more children and young people return.

Approaches we are asking schools and other settings to take include:

- carrying out a risk assessment before opening to more children and young people - the assessment should directly address risks associated with coronavirus (COVID-19) so that sensible measures can be put in place to minimise those risks
- making sure that children and young people do not attend if they or a member of their household has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- promoting regular hand washing for 20 seconds with running water and soap and ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the catch it, bin it, kill it
- cleaning more frequently to get rid of the virus on frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, handrails, tabletops, play equipment and toys
- minimising contact through smaller classes or group sizes and altering the environment as much as possible, such as changing the layout of classrooms
- reducing mixing between groups through timetable changes, such as staggered break times or by introducing staggered drop-off and collection times

If my child is eligible, is it compulsory for them to attend school?

We strongly encourage children and young people in the eligible year groups and priority groups (such as children of critical workers) to attend, as requested by their school or college, unless they are self-isolating or there are other reasons for absence (such as shielding due to health conditions).



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You should notify your child's school or college as normal if your child is unable to attend so that staff are aware and can discuss with you. Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.

Do all vulnerable young people who are not currently attending have to go back to childcare settings, school or college now?

Educational settings should continue to offer places to priority groups. In particular, as per the existing guidance on supporting vulnerable children and young people during the coronavirus outbreak, vulnerable children of all year groups continue to be expected and encouraged to attend educational provision where it is appropriate for them to do so.

- For children who have a social worker, attendance is expected unless their social worker decides that they are at less risk at home or in their placement.
- For children who have an education health and care (EHC) plan, attendance is expected where it is determined, following a risk assessment, that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment.
- For children who are deemed otherwise vulnerable, at the school, college or local authority discretion, attendance is expected where this is appropriate.

Should I keep my child at home if they have an underlying health condition or live with someone in a clinically vulnerable group?

Children and young people who are considered extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding should continue to shield and should not be expected to attend.

Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19). A minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice.

Young people who live in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and the child or young person is able to understand and follow those instructions.

Young people who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) as defined in the social distancing guidance and including those who are pregnant, can attend.

Can young people be tested for the virus?

Young people and staff in all settings are eligible for testing if they become ill with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, as are members of their household. This will enable young people to get back to childcare or education, and their parents or carers to get back to work, if the test proves to be negative. A positive test will ensure rapid action to protect their classmates and staff in their setting.



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What if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in my child's school?

When a young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19), they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and students will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Where the young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their group within their education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class/group do not need to self-isolate unless the young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the child or young person's cohort or in the wider education or childcare setting, Public Health England's local Health Protection Teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases, a larger number of other children and young people may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure - perhaps the whole class, site or year group.

Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.

Will education be provided as normal to children and young people who are attending?

Schools continue to be best placed to make decisions about how to support and educate their pupils during this period.

For pupils in year 10 and 12, and 16-19 learners in the first year of their course, we are asking schools to supplement remote education with some face-to-face support for these year groups from 15 June.

Remote education will remain the predominant mode of education for these pupils, and schools and colleges will be able to have a quarter of the year 10 and year 12 pupils in at any one time. Schools and colleges should consider how to best use this time to support those pupils who are starting their final year of study for GCSEs, A levels and other qualifications next academic year.

How should my child travel to and from their childcare, school or college?

Children, young people and parents are encouraged to walk or cycle where possible and avoid public transport at peak times. You can refer to the government's guidance on safe travel, particularly on public transport.



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Home to school transport provided or organised by schools, trusts or local authorities varies widely. Schools, trusts and local authorities should work together and with relevant transport providers to put in place arrangements which fit the local circumstances, including the measures being put in place to reduce contact.



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