



Harriers Banbury Academy

an Aspirations Academy

Alex Pearson – Executive Principal

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Dear Parents/Carers,

The government issued guidance yesterday to support the full opening of schools in September. The guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

It is the government's plan that all pupils in all year groups will return to school full time from the beginning of the autumn term. In our preparations for this, we are carefully acting on the government guidance to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff.

We will send you a letter before the end of term outlining more specific arrangements for the autumn term but thought it helpful to send you this early letter with more general information from the government guidance.

The Aspirations Academies Trust supports the view set out in the government guidance that returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing. Time out of school is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. This impact can affect both current levels of learning and children's future ability to learn, and therefore we need to ensure all pupils can return to school sooner rather than later. The guidance also sets out the government's assessment that the risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low, and the balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of children returning to school.

The guidance sets out that pupils should be taught in class or year group 'bubbles'. In accordance with this, we will make plans in order to limit the movement of pupils and the amount of interaction between them. This will involve us staggering the start and end times of the school day still and also break times.

Getting to school may be a concern for some parents. The government are encouraging pupils to walk or cycle to and from school wherever this is possible. For those pupils who need to use public transport, we shall be considering potential arrangements to enable more journeys to take place outside of peak time. Families using public transport should refer to the safer travel guidance for passengers.

We are advised that school attendance will be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This would mean that from September the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child attends regularly where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- Schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence;
- The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice (e.g. they are specifically being asked to self-isolate), we expect to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education. Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.

Any questions regarding attendance must be addressed before the end of term with our Welfare Manager, Mrs Hawkins, via nhawkins@harriers-aspirations.org.

The government also expects that kitchens will be fully open from the start of the autumn term and normal legal requirements will apply regarding the provision of food to all pupils who want it, including those eligible for free school meals.

Finally, the uniform expectations will be back to normal, with all elements of the uniform policy expected to be followed from September. This is also in line with government advice.

We are seeking further guidance regarding wraparound care, and if it will be able to reopen in September.

I hope this information is helpful to you. As I stated earlier in this letter, we will send you a letter before the end of term outlining our specific plans for September.

Thank you once again for your continued support.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Pearson', with a small flourish at the end.

Alex Pearson
Executive Principal