

Media Statement

Friday 15 May 2020

Reopening of schools and childcare settings in Nottingham City

Nottingham City Council has responded to the Government announcement that schools will reopen on 1 June to primary school children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 – as well as nurseries and other early years childcare settings.

Nottingham City Council is responsible for 33 local authority schools (primary, special and nursery) through the independent Nottingham Schools Trust of 36 member schools. All other secondary, special and primary schools in the city are academies.

Cllr Neghat Khan, Portfolio Holder for Early Years, Education and Employment, said:

“The safety of children and staff is our main priority. I want to be clear that we will be encouraging schools to take all precautions to minimise risk to pupils, parents or teachers.

“We are working closely with schools in the city to understand how we can support them to be ready to reopen as soon as they feel it is safe to do so. The Government has set a return date of 1 June for children for Nurseries, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 – but we will need to be certain that the schools will be able to do this in a safe way.

“It is important to remember that our schools have never closed during the Covid-19 crisis; they have remained open for the children of key workers and to vulnerable children for the last eight weeks. During this time, they have developed new ways of working to allow a small number of children to be safely in school.

“We are now looking at ways of scaling this up so that we can start to increase gradually the number of children who return so that schools can continue to address safety concerns and good hygiene within a school or nursery environment. This might include smaller class sizes, part time hours and staggered start and finish times for example. This will obviously mean that not all pupils can be in school at any one time.

“We have strong links with all partners across schools, academies, nurseries and special needs schools – all are committed to finding a way forward.”

Cllr David Mellen, Leader of Nottingham City Council, said:

“While the City Council and schools in Nottingham recognise the role we play in ensuring our city can begin to reopen, we know there are concerns – especially those of the teaching unions. We share their priority for keeping staff safe.

“We also know that parents will be anxious. We would like to reassure them that every measure will be taken to keep children as safe as possible. If parents choose to keep their children at home, they will not be fined for non-attendance.

“We are aware this won’t be easy – but our schools have valuable local experience that we can built on.

“I’d like to thank all of the teachers and support staff who have worked tirelessly for the last eight weeks, both in school and in delivering remote learning online and through workbooks – as well as our staff in nurseries and early years settings. I’m proud of the way our city continues to respond to this crisis.”

ENDS