



27th August 2020

Dear parents and carers

Guidance for full opening September 2020

I do hope you and your family have had a peaceful summer break. We are very much looking forward to welcoming pupils back to school next week on Thursday 3 September.

I do understand that you and your child may have some anxieties about returning to school. I can assure you that we have worked very closely with the Government guidance to ensure that we reduce risks as much as possible. A very detailed risk assessment is in place which addresses the essential measures designed to reduce risk. These include:

- a requirement that staff and pupils who are ill or self isolating stay at home
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable

We will be focusing on:

- grouping children together for the duration the school day
- reducing and where possible avoiding contact between groups
- arranging classrooms with forward facing desks
- staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff if this is possible without compromising teaching and pastoral care

We have made considerable adjustments to the operation of the school, the school day and in the delivery of the curriculum to reduce the risk of Covid 19 entering the school site, minimising any spread, and to ensure that we respond safely and effectively to any potential or confirmed cases within our community.

What are the measures within Northern House Academy

Our specific measures include:

- we will be operating the school as one 'bubble' but also our Galleries will operate as 'islands' in which children will be able to socialise (outside for break and lunchtimes (endeavouring to maintain social distancing as much as possible).
- different classes will have designated entrance gates into the school. Staff will greet children from their transport each morning

- electronic items that the children use in the taxis on the way to and from school can still be used but these will be stored within their bags during the day. Other items from home should not be brought into school (toys, blankets etc)
- regular handwashing will become part of the normal school routine throughout the day.
- we will only be able to offer school packed lunches for those pupils who do not bring in their own lunch (we are hoping this is only for a short period of time)

What is our policy on face masks?

You will be aware of the current media coverage regarding face masks. At Northern House Academy, we are not permitting pupils to wear face masks as these are not recommended for children under 12 years of age.

Where can I get further guidance?

The Government have launched a *#backtoschoolsafely* campaign, intended to reassure parents and students about returning to schools in September. This encourages parents to visit gov.uk/backtoschool for information and practical guidance to help them plan for their children's return to school. Useful information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

We do ask that you keep us informed if Covid 19 affects your household, and that you follow the Government guidance designed to reduce the spread of Covid 19. We all have a part to play in countering the virus.

In these changing and extraordinary times, there is no doubt that the situation will continue to evolve and develop. I will update you in the event of any further planned changes. In the meantime, please get in touch with me if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours sincerely

Mrs B Holmes
Head of School