

9 June 2020

Dear parent/carers

Return of more children to schools in Nottingham from 15 June

We are writing to you regarding the phased reopening of schools to pupils from Year 6 in Nottingham from Monday 15 June.

Following discussions with unions, head teachers and public health officials, we are confident that primary schools can begin a gradual increase in pupils based upon risk assessments made in line with government guidelines.

Our new position follows three key changes since we announced two weeks ago that the conditions were not yet right for pupils to return. The changes are:

1. Nottingham has seen a sustained fall in the number of cases of Covid-19 which significantly lowers the risk of children and adults contracting the virus in a school setting.
2. The capacity for testing children and adults in Nottingham has increased since 1 June. This is an important development in supporting schools to gradually increase pupil numbers.
3. Scientific evidence from the independent SAGE committee pointed to the potential fall in the infection rate by waiting a further two weeks from the proposed original date of the 1 June

At this stage we are recommending for schools to reopen more widely only to Year 6 pupils. We will continue to review with schools and trade unions the timing of decisions for children in Early Years, Reception and Year 1 to gradually phase in their return to school.

The council would also like to make clear that if parents choose to keep their children at home, they will not be fined for non-attendance. We recognise that the decision at this time rests with parents/carers based upon their judgment.

This has been a long and difficult journey. We have never experienced anything like this in our lifetimes; we want be confident that the decisions made are the right ones at the time. The safety of our children and staff has always been our top priority.

Our schools have been open for the children of key workers and vulnerable pupils throughout the lockdown. Based upon this experience, our school staff have done a tremendous job of putting risk assessments in place to understand how best to open our schools safely to more pupils. We would like to thank them all for their patience in the process of getting children back into school.

We would also like to acknowledge the hard work of parents and carers throughout lockdown so far – and for the next six weeks ahead of the summer holiday. We look forward to the time when all children will return to Nottingham Schools.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Mellen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Councillor David Mellen
Leader of the Council
Nottingham City Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Khan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Councillor Neghat Khan
Portfolio Holder for Early Years,
Employment and Education