

28th May 2020

RE: Re-opening of Iqra School

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following on from the guidance received from the Government and from SAGE (Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies) we have worked on an action plan to prepare for our phase reopening of Iqra school in June. It is important that we inform you of the careful measures we are taking to allow you to make an informed decision about whether to send your child back to school yet. We have based our re-opening strategy upon three key grounds:

Firstly, the priority must be the safety of everyone in our school community. At the moment there is a lack of clarity in the scientific advice about the safety of re-opening schools on June 1st. (<http://www.independentsage.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Independent-Sage-Brief-Report-on-Schools.pdf>). In fact, the report states that *'Delaying a school re-opening by two weeks (to 15th June) approximately halves the risk of infection to children'*. Therefore, it would be unwise to rapidly reopen the school. 80% of parents from the online questionnaire said they would not send their children back to school at this time because they did not feel safe. Those that did want to start school, wanted to be assured that their children would be 'safe'. We cannot 'guarantee' this nor could we 'guarantee' the safety of our staff. We can however, put stringent risk assessments in place.

Secondly, people with a BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic) background which have been identified as the most vulnerable ethnicities during this pandemic. Pupils at Iqra school community are overwhelmingly from a BAME background. Finally, our school community has a very high proportion of families who live in multi-generational houses. Whilst the scientific evidence indicates that children are less likely to be badly affected if they catch COVID-19, their parents and grandparents are much more vulnerable. Therefore, the decision to send your child back to school rests entirely with you as a parent. As per the government's guidance - *Where children are unable to sustain safe social distancing and hygiene measures, and live in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable and has chosen to shield, those children will not be expected to attend an early years setting. Consider how you can support parents and carers to understand the risks.* You will not be penalised if you choose not to send your child to school.

In order to ensure the safe return of pupils, all protective measures recommended in the published government documents must be in place alongside careful and vigorous risk assessments. As a result, we have decided that our youngest children in the EYFS will be the last to be invited into school.

Pupils of Key workers

Pupils of parents identified as critical workers (please see the link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>) will be invited to attend school from Tuesday 2nd June. They will start at 8:40am and will finish at 2:00pm. Pupils of key workers need to be dropped off at the main gate where they will be collected by their allocated teacher.

Y6 phased return

Initially, Year 6 pupils will be invited to attend school from Thursday 4th June. They will be offered a school place every Thursday and Friday throughout the period Thursday 4th June – Friday 19th June. Pupils in Year 6 will start the day at 9:20am and finish at 2pm. Pupils in Year 6 need to be dropped off at the main gate where they will be collected by their allocated teacher.

Y1 phased return

Year 1 pupils will be invited to attend school from Monday 8th June. They will be offered a school place every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday throughout the period Monday 8th June – Friday 19th June. Pupils in Year 1 will start the day at 9:20am and finish at 2pm. Pupils in Year 1 need to be dropped off at the main gate where they will be collected by their allocated teacher.

Reception phased return

The government have published a very comprehensive guide for EYFS reopening in June. Please click on the link below to access the full document:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-early-years-and-childcare-settings-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-early-years-and-childcare-settings>

A summary of the above guidance is as follows:

- all frequently touched surfaces, equipment, door handles, and toilets, used during the day, will need to be cleaned thoroughly several times a day.
- floor space, rooms and outdoor space are to be organised in order to ensure physical distancing between staff and between groups of children. Children aged 3 to 5 years need 2.3 metres squared per child
- area dividers may help to keep children in different parts of the room, and floor markings could be helpful in assisting staff with keeping groups apart. The use of communal spaces in settings should be managed to limit the amount of mixing between groups as much as possible.
- in order to facilitate cleaning, remove unnecessary items from learning environments. Public health advice is to remove all soft toys, and any toys that are

hard to clean, such as those with intricate parts. Where practicable, remove soft furnishings, for example pillows, bean bags and rugs.

- keeping group sizes smaller is preferable
- physical distancing between groups of children and staff as far as possible
- that individual groups use the same area of a setting throughout the day as much as possible
- that the sharing of toys and resources is reduced
- ensure sufficient handwashing facilities (running water and soap, alcohol hand rub, sanitiser, skin-friendly wipes) are available for staff and children, and that hands are washed upon entering the setting, regularly throughout the day, before and after eating and when they leave.
- ensure that children do not bring in their own toys from home
- reduce contact between parents and carers when dropping off and picking up their children, for example by limiting drop off and pick up to one parent or carer per family and staggering timings
- the same members of staff should be assigned to each group and these should stay the same during the day and on subsequent days.
- malleable resources, such as play dough, should not be shared between groups and public health advice is that, as sand pits cannot be thoroughly cleaned between uses, they should not be used at this time.

Reception children will be invited to come in on **Monday 15th June**. Each Reception class will be split into Group A and Group B with no more than 15 children in each group. Children in Group A will attend on Monday and Tuesday and children in Group B will attend school on Wednesday and Thursday. This phased return is to ensure the continuity of staff (their own class teacher) and to ensure the mental wellbeing of our youngest children so that the return to school is less scary and daunting. This phased return will be reviewed weekly to ensure that social distancing is adhered to. The school day will start from 9:00am – 1:30pm.

The phased returns and staggered days are to ensure that the strict government guidelines on social distancing are adhered to by all pupils so that Iqra can keep children, their families and our staff safe.

Summary of the return to school attendance strategy -

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thursday	Friday
Key Workers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year 6				✓	✓
Year 1	✓	✓	✓		
Reception	✓ Group A	✓ Group A	✓ Group B	✓ Group B	

Essential Information for Parents

It is essential that all parents familiarise themselves with the latest government guidelines on the reopening of schools. This advice is constantly being updated so it is important that you check the gov.uk website regularly.

Please discuss the expectations set out below with your children BEFORE their allocated start date. Please explain to your child/children that the points below will be the new school rules and must be abided by at all times. We understand that younger children may find the information overwhelming and possibly scary but please be assured that all the new measures are in place to reduce risk of transmission of coronavirus.

- Pupils must only attend school if they or a member of their household do not have COVID-19 related symptoms.
- All parents MUST arrive at school at their allocated times and follow the floor markings and area dividers in order to maintain social distancing. Once you have collected your child you must leave the premises immediately. Congregation of parents outside the school gates may jeopardise the safety of other pupils, parents and staff.
- Only 1 adult may bring a child to and from school
- Parents will not be allowed onto the school playground or inside the school building to drop off their child.
- Any contact with the school and the teachers must remain via phone or email. If parents do need urgent advice from the school office, then please follow the floor markings to ensure social distancing. Please allow for queues during busy periods.
- Children will line up outside of the school gates on using the floor markings and area dividers to ensure social distancing. Class teachers will collect your child at the gates.
- As class groupings are limited to 15 or less, your child may be taught by someone other than their class teacher.
- Iqra school will endorse the additional hygiene and infection control measures recommended by the government throughout the day. This will begin by sanitising your child's hands at the school gate. Pupils will then be encouraged to wash their hands with soap after hanging up their bags/coats and then regularly throughout the day.
- All pupils will be allocated a desk in their classrooms. They will remain in their allocated seats for the day. There will be no need for any children to bring in any stationary as these will be allocated by the school.

- All soft toys, furnishings, carpets, books and other items which cannot be disinfected easily will be removed from the classroom. Pupils may not bring in any of their own toys.
- Break times will be for 10min and will be taken with other pupils in their class only.
- All water fountains across the school will be out of use so pupils must bring their own water bottle with their name clearly marked on it.
- Pupils entitled to Universal free school meals and free school meals in EYFS, Year 1, Year 6, from the Key Worker and vulnerable groups will be provided for in school. Lunches will be eaten in the allocated classroom to avoid mixing of children and to minimise movement around the school. Consequently, the allocated lunch time will be reduced to 30mins.
- Children must wear the full school uniform every day (preferably cleaned each day).

What to do if there is a suspected case of COVID 19 at school?

- If a pupil or staff member shows symptoms of COVID-19 they will be sent home to self-isolate for 7 days. Their household members will also be sent home to self-isolate for 14 days.
- Please be aware that all children attending the school over the age of 5, and members of their household, will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus and they are encouraged to get tested in this scenario.
- If the test is negative, pupils and staff are encouraged to return to school and the household ends self-isolation.
- If the test is positive the individual is encouraged to seek medical advice and/or treatment. Their class group will be sent home and told to self-isolate for 14 days.
- If other cases are detected within the school, we will report to Public Health England who will investigate and advise.

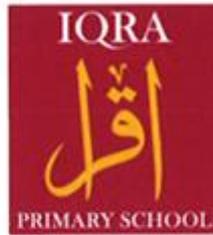
During the first three weeks of reopening we will review the impact of the school health and safety strategies and consider the possibility to bring in other year groups and increase the number of children back in school. This decision will be made with due consideration to the safe working and learning environments for all our pupils and staff. We will keep parents fully informed and provide you with adequate notice should we decide we can bring more children into our schools.

Finally, we will also continue to provide home learning opportunities and update the homework every Friday to all the pupils who are not invited to come to school in person. If you have any questions, please contact the school office in the first instance. Please keep safe and well.

Your Sincerely,

Dr Mineza Maher, Head Teacher

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