***Summary of DfE Guidance for Return to School***

Introduction

It is the Government’s plan that all children in all year groups will return to school full-time from the beginning of the Autumn term. 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. The risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school.

Government guidance has been provided to school leaders to put in place proportionate protective measures for children and staff, which also ensure that all pupils receive a high-quality education that enables them to thrive and progress. It is the expectation that all ‘Looked After Children’ in the London Borough of Enfield will return to school for the start of the Autumn term.

What might be new

When pupils return to school in September the environment is going to be different from what they remember. School leaders have completed risk assessments and will introduce a system of controls that works for their school and allows them to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for their pupils, including full educational and care support for those pupils who have SEND.

Pupils returning to school can expect new routines, habits and systems including;

* Expectations for arriving at and leaving school (including behaviour on public transport)
* Hygiene practices
* Lunch and break time routines
* Transitions between lessons
* Staff supervision of movement during social times
* Safe use of school spaces and equipment
* Restrictions on movement within school and new hygiene rules

Behaviour

Teachers will need to teach students about the new behavioural expectations required to ensure the safety of everyone on the school site. It will be made explicit to students what behaviours are now considered more serious due to coronavirus (COVID19) outbreak, for example purposefully coughing on someone.

Many schools will update their behaviour policies to include new rules related to the controls put in place to reduce the coronavirus (COVID19) risks. We will expect our young people returning to school for the Autumn term to be aware of new behaviour expectations and the potential sanctions for failure to comply with school policies.

Attendance

it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children’s education, wellbeing and wider development. Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

* parents’ duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school 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

Support

There will be pupils who are likely to need some social and emotional support on their return to full time school. Some pupils will need extra support, such as those who have previously had poor attendance or fixed term exclusions as well as those starting a new school. Carers and social workers are encouraged to contact the school before the start of the school year, to set expectations, understand concerns and build confidence. Enfield Virtual School has reminded all schools’ designated teachers to put in place a transition plan and has requested they are returned to the Virtual School, allocated SW and it is good practice to discussed this with the foster carer.

Schools have been provided with extensive guidance on supporting pupil and student mental wellbeing. In particular school SEND teams have been given training on supporting pupils with SEND to return to their mainstream school after a long absence.

Schools should be offering pastoral and extra-curricular activities to all pupils designed to:

* Support the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement
* Address and equip pupils to respond to issues linked to coronavirus (COVID19)
* Support pupils with approaches to improving their physical and mental wellbeing

Schools should also provide more focused pastoral support where issues are identified that individual pupils may need help with, drawing on external support where necessary and possible.

Useful Links

[DfE Guidance for full opening: schools](file:///C:\Users\LCBROWN\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\XG31HWQV\DfE%20Guidance%20for%20full%20opening:%20schools)

[DfE - Guidance on isolation for residential education settings](file:///C:\Users\LCBROWN\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\XG31HWQV\DfE%20-%20Guidance%20on%20isolation%20for%20residential%20education%20settings)

[COVID19 - cleaning of non-healthcare settings outside the home](file:///C:\Users\LCBROWN\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\XG31HWQV\COVID19%20-%20cleaning%20of%20non-healthcare%20settings%20outside%20the%20home)

[Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care](file:///C:\Users\LCBROWN\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\XG31HWQV\Safe%20working%20in%20education,%20childcare%20and%20children's%20social%20care)

[Testing and tracing for coronavirus](file:///C:\Users\LCBROWN\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\XG31HWQV\Testing%20and%20tracing%20for%20coronavirus)

[Coronavirus (COVID19) - safer travel guidance for passengers](file:///C:\Users\LCBROWN\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\XG31HWQV\Coronavirus%20(COVID19)%20-%20safer%20travel%20guidance%20for%20passengers)

[COVID19 - Shielding guidance for children and young people](file:///C:\Users\LCBROWN\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\XG31HWQV\COVID19%20-%20Shielding%20guidance%20for%20children%20and%20young%20people)

[Extra mental health support for pupils and teachers](file:///C:\Users\LCBROWN\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\XG31HWQV\Extra%20mental%20health%20support%20for%20pupils%20and%20teachers)