

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

We will continue to review our plans for re-opening and will communicate any changes as they are made. We will be updating this page of FAQs regularly, in response to emails we have received from parents and careers.

Please note, we do not have the capacity to reply to individual emails at this stage, but we will do our best to answer every we can on this page.

Thank you for your understanding.

### **Questions:**

#### **1. How will the school ensure that my child is safe?**

*School leaders, staff and union groups are working together to complete Risk Assessments covering all aspects of school life, which is currently 30 pages and will be approved by The Governing Body and the HLT legal department.*

#### **2. Will the school re-open for Nursery, Years 2 – 5 before September?**

*With the current Government guidance being used (e.g. small groups of no more than 12 children per pod), we will not have the capacity with both staff and the building itself to re-open to any more children this term. You will see from the plan, we have not planned to open for Nursery, Year 2- 5 children this academic year. The school will close to all children on 17<sup>th</sup> July. There will no home learning materials over the summer holiday period.*

*Plans for September will be communicated at the earliest point.*

#### **3. I answered 'no' to my child returning. Can I change my mind? Will I penalized if I do over those who initially said 'yes'?**

*Yes, we are aware that parents/ carers do not have all of the information they would like in making this decision (nor do we, staffing is still being evaluated through our Risk Assessment), which is why we have indicated that a parents can change their mind wither way – by giving a weeks notice to allow for staffing to be adjusted where necessary.*

*No family will be penalized for changing their mind. Like many schools, the survey was sent in order to help us formulate a plan with a projection of numbers, but as we are being advised, we are planning staffing and spaces based on all children in the selected years groups returning.*

#### **4. Will we know who will staff each pod before the children return?**

*We are in the process of allocating staffing. This will be shared before the children return. It is unlikely that your child will be taught by their class teacher.*

**5. As there cannot be a teacher appointed to each pod, what will the curriculum consist of?**

*All pods will be taught the same curriculum. The curriculum will be in line with the home learning materials to ensure that children who do not return are not at a disadvantage. We will also be working to protect teacher workload.*

**6. How will the decision on which children are pooled together be made?**

*School who work with the children will divide the children into pods, to create balanced groups.*

**7. You mention that when other children have a temperature they will be isolated and their parents asked to take the child home. Will other parents with children at school be informed when another child or staff member to which they could potentially have been exposed (directly or indirectly) has had a temperature?**

*Yes. The children and staff from this same pod would all be sent home and told to self-isolate (as per the Government guidelines). The child/ staff member would be tested. If the test was negative, the pod could return to school. If the test is positive, the whole pod would need to continue to self-isolate (with their families) for 14 days.*

**8. What is the school's policy on testing? Will tests be used? By whom and how frequently?**

*The school does not have a policy that it devises independently. All schools must follow Government guidelines and if any child or staff member displays symptoms, they must be tested. There are local test centers in Hackney/ home testing kits can be provided.*

*No one is currently tested unless they display symptoms.*

*We will follow the updates on testing and implement any changes.*

**9. If one of my children is eligible to return can't their sibling come back too?**

*Sadly, the answer to this is 'no'. Siblings cannot attend unless they are in another of the selected year groups. This would raise the number of pupils attending the school.*

**10. Does my child have to attend?**

*No one with symptoms should attend for any reason. Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.*

**11. I am worried that my child is vulnerable or that a family member is, should I send them back to school?**

*Children and young people who are considered extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding should continue to shield and should not be expected to attend. Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. A minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category. Children and young people who live in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and the child or young person is able to understand and follow those instructions. Children and young people who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) as defined in the social distancing guidance and including those who are pregnant, can attend. DFE May 2020 6.*

**12. How big will the classes be?**

*The DfE is recommending class group size of a maximum of 15 children in each group and one adult to lead the group. Where there are not enough teachers, other support staff will lead a group. Desks should be as far apart as the room allows. Having completed audits and risk assessments, we will have classes of no more than 12 as we believe that this is what our setting can safely accommodate.*

**13. How will you guarantee that social distancing takes place e.g. keeping children 2m apart?**

*We will of course do our best to support distancing, but parents must understand that in returning to school there is a very real likelihood that children will touch adults and one another and come into close contact. The nature of the school site and the age of our children is such that this is unavoidable, and we cannot be expected to respond to complaints around this when it inevitably happens. We cannot alleviate every risk and parents must understand what we are able to do and use this to inform their decision making.*

**14. How do I explain social distancing to my child?**

*Be open and honest, using language they will understand. Explain that they are helping others by their actions. Use drawings if needed and use a positive tone. Try to make the children feel safe. For younger children, you and your child can find out how the Gruffalo handles social distancing.*

**15. What hygiene measures will be in place to keep my child safe?**

*We will:*

*Follow the COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance*

*Ensure that sufficient handwashing facilities are available. Hand sanitiser is in classrooms and other learning environments*

*Clean surfaces that children and young people are touching, such as toys, books, desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches, bannisters, more regularly than normal*

*Ensure that all adults and children:*

*Frequently wash their hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly*

*Clean their hands-on arrival at the setting, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing*

*Are encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose*

*Use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it')*

*Ensure that help is available for children and young people who have trouble cleaning their hands independently*

*Consider how to encourage young children to learn and practice these habits through games, songs and repetition*

*Ensure that bins for tissues are emptied throughout the day*

*Where possible, all spaces should be well ventilated using natural ventilation e.g. opening windows and doors (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding)*

**16. Will children be confined to the same classroom environment most of the day?**

*Government advice on the Scientific evidence shows that the outdoor environment is much more manageable in terms of virus transmission. With the summer weather already here we will endeavor to spend as much time outside as is possible. However outside of this we will keep children where possible within one set classroom for the day.*

**17. How will lunch time work to ensure children are safe?**

*The schools will run a staggered lunchtime to maintain as much spacing as is possible in the hall. Lunches will return as the government has requested “schools are expected to reopen their kitchens and ensure that meals are able to be prepared and served safely”. Free School Meal children will continue to receive meals or food boxes if they are not attending school. Children will not be allowed to bring a packed lunch into school.*

**18. How will you make school safe for my child?**

*In addition to social distancing and hygiene measures mentioned above, we will:*

*Give children a designated classroom (which we are going to refer to as their group) for lessons and play in order to minimise the opportunity for mixing*

*Regularly cleaning the setting and resources will take place*

*Regularly clean the children’s personal resources (pencils etc)*

*Use PPE such as gloves, aprons, masks, hand sanitiser and anti-bac wipes as identified in our Risk assessments*

*Confine resources to rooms to minimise sharing and when sharing is essential, clean resources before transference*

*Organise staggered lunchtimes and playtimes so again minimise the opportunity for mixing*

*Carry out a corridor protocol- keep clear corridor spaces as far as is practical to allow maximum width space for walking*

*Be vigilant in identifying children with symptoms, isolate them and ask parents to collect them*

*Employ a set of agreed non-negotiables on safety in the classroom agreed by all the children and staff at LEAP schools. These will make every attempt to maintain social distancing for staff and pupils and limit any potential contact*

*Removal of unnecessary items from classrooms*

*Removal of soft furnishing, soft toys and toys that are hard to clean*

**19. Will everyone arrive at school at the same time causing an increase in risk?**

*We have 4inimize4 a staggered drop off and collection time for children and their parents. We ask just one parent/carer to collect their children and to observe a 2m social distance space around each family. Only one parent or carer should accompany the child to 4inimize risk. Parents will not be invited to enter the school site but will drop off as will be explained in individual year group letters and drop off/ collection map.*

**20. Will the school have assembly, concerts, sports days, etc?**

*All school events will be cancelled.*

**21. My child is feeling anxious about coming back to school, how can I prepare him/her?**

*We ask that you help support your child by talking about what school was like and what it will be like now. It will be different. It will be important to encourage your child to talk about their experiences in ‘lockdown’ and that this period is now ending.*

**22. Will children go straight back into normal lessons following the national curriculum?**

*No. The initial focus, for as long as we feel necessary, will be on supporting personal, social, health and emotional aspects of learning to support children's wellbeing and following the planning provided as part of home learning. Our Mental Health Lead and Inclusion Team will be available to support.*

**23. Will staff and children wear masks or PPE?**

*The Government guidelines state, 'The majority of staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases including:*

- *Children, young people and students whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs should continue to receive their care in the same way*
- *If a child, young person or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home. A fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of 2 meters cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then disposable gloves, a disposable apron and a fluid resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult.*

*However, some staff will wear masks or visors for their own/ others security which we will agree.*

*If any child or adult feels unwell, staff supporting that person will wear PPE to reduce potential expose to COVID-19. 23.*

**24. Will my child need to wear a school uniform?**

*Children can wear school uniform so long as it is washed daily. Because clean clothes must be worn each day, children can come into school without uniform. If your child is not wearing uniform, please sent practical clothing that children can wear for PE activities. This means that they will not need to bring in a PE kit and can carry out all activities without having to change. The Government is advising that once returning from an educational setting, clothes should be removed and washed and a clean set of clothes worn the following day.*

**25. Will the breakfast club and after school club be open?**

*No*

**26. Will the school office be open?**

*Yes but only to take phone calls. We will communicate with parents electronically via text, email or phone where possible. You will not be able to enter the school site.*

**27. Will you continue to provide online home learning activities for children who do not return to school?**

*Home learning will continue.*

**28. Will children and young people be eligible for testing for the virus?**

*The government advice is: when settings open to the wider cohort of children and young people, all those children and young people eligible to attend, and members of their households, will have access to testing if they display symptoms of coronavirus.*

**29. What will happen if a child in the class shows symptoms?**

*We will follow the Government guidelines set out below. If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in an education or childcare setting, they must be sent home and advised to follow the COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance. If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 meters away from other people. If they need to go to the toilet while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate toilet if possible. The toilet should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else. PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 meters cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs). In an emergency, we will call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk.*

**30. What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in school?**

*We will follow the Government guidance set out below. When a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household and their group at school should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and students who are attending an education or childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus, and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario. Where the child or staff member tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members and group can end their self-isolation. Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class or group within their childcare or education setting should stay at home and self-isolate for 14 days. As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases a larger number of other children, young people may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole class, site or year group. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.*

**31. Are we using the government led SAGE advice, as well as the independent SAGE reports.**

*Yes. There is an additional document which shows the advice we are using to support our decisions in the increased opening of the schools.*

**32. How can I speak to the class teacher if we are socially distancing?**

*You can contact your child's class teacher by emailing the class emails already provided.*

**33. Who is Key Worker provision open to?**

*Our Key Worker provision will continue and will be provided for the children of key workers who are going into work. Please note that we do not have the capacity in school (both space and staffing) to increase our offer to the children of parents who are key workers and working from home.*

**34. Why is the provision being offered from schools different across Hackney, London, the UK?**

*Each setting has to apply the government guidance on the reopening of schools in a way that be delivered in their setting. Each setting has a different building and staff, so these key factors must be considered. Each school has a varied number of children returning. Gayhurst currently has many more children returning than other schools – this in turn impacts the amount of days each cohort can be given in school.*

### **35. Why are Year 6 in once a week (four days in total)?**

*The government asked us to prioritise bringing the youngest children back first and so we concentrated on making this work, which is using up a large number of available staff due to ratios (2 adults per 12 children) and staff who are unable to work due to Covid related concerns. As we were asked to provide transition support for Year 6, we looked at the amount of time necessary to deliver transition activities and decided it would be better to have a really good quality day a week rather than have them in for any more than this. This has helped us to keep the total numbers in school each day to no more than 150 children at one time which is the most possible if we are going to socially distance at lunchtime and at playtimes and with the staggered beginning and end to the day.*

*If the choice had been entirely up to us we would have chosen to have more of the older children in for longer especially Y2, 3, 4 and 5 who are currently getting no in school provision at all.*

*We sought clear guidance and were told that as the national drive was to get Reception and Year 1 in to school as the highest priority that's what we should focus on. Every school has ended up with different offers and we cannot explain other schools rationale but one of the things effecting everyone's decisions will have been staffing availability and premises layout. It should also be stressed that with 7 pods per year group we are already using all of our 22 classroom spaces to accommodate the 2 metre distancing, which means we don't have additional spaces to use. If the 2 meter distancing is still in place in September fitting more children per day is going to be a very difficult challenge.*

### **36. What happened in school w/c 01.06.20 and 08.06.20**

*Key Worker provision continued to be provided as well as hampers of food prepared for FSM families. Training was delivered to staff and the building was prepared for re-opening.*

### **37. Will the school be planning a leavers celebration for Year 6 in January 2021?**

*The school will plan a leaver's celebration for Year 6 at the earliest date in which it is safe to do so.*

### **38. Can we change our mind to our child in attending school?**

*You can change your mind about your child attending school but please give the school 5 working days notice to allow for any changes to staffing.*

If you have any further questions please email them to:

[admin@gayhurst.hackney.sch.uk](mailto:admin@gayhurst.hackney.sch.uk)