

The Opening of Nottingham City Schools

What Parents Should Know

Schools in Nottingham City are welcoming back pupils from September 2020 for the new academic year. This will be the first time that schools open to all year groups since lockdown began on 23 March 2020. In June, schools only opened to limited year groups – although they have remained open throughout the Covid-19 crisis to children of key workers and children with additional needs.

Nottingham City Council has supported schools to be well prepared, with appropriate measures in place.

We are confident that our schools have undertaken considerable work to ensure that everything is safe, including risk assessments, good sanitation, hand-washing, social distancing and learning ‘bubbles’ – all tailored to their individual requirements.

Information for parents and carers

Evidence has shown that the risk of severe disease in children is low. Nottingham has also seen lower rates of infection than elsewhere in the country.

However, it is still in general circulation, so schools are putting sensible precautions in place to reduce potential transmission and minimise any risk to teachers and pupils.

Schools will have plans in place to offer education to pupils remotely if necessary, if they need to self-isolate.

If you have concerns, please speak to your school about the plans they have in place.

More information:

- Statement from the UK Chief Medical Officers on schools and childcare reopening (23 August 2020)
- Public Health England’s study (23 August 2020)

Fines for not attending school

Pupils are expected to return to school in September. Fines for non-attendance are always a last resort to schools who will be working with parents and carers to identify any problems that they may have and provide reassurances. Fines are only issued to parents and carers by the City Council at the request of head teachers.

If you have specific concerns about your child returning please contact your child's school so that they can work together with you to resolve this with you.

Taking steps to stop the spread

All schools will comply with essential measures, which include:

- a requirement that children and adults who are ill stay at home
- effective hand and respiratory hygiene
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- measures to reduce contact and maximise social distancing between those in school wherever possible, minimising potential for contamination.

The exact measures will vary from school to school, and will to some extent depend on the layout of buildings. Measures include:

- grouping children together
- avoiding contact between groups
- arranging classrooms with forward facing desks
- staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible

Latest government guidance for parents and carers of children returning to school or college in September: www.gov.uk/backtoschool.

Free school meals

School and college kitchens will be open from the start of the new term. They will provide free school meals and universal infant free school meals as usual for those who are eligible.

Travel to school

There are many ways pupils can travel to school:

- We would encourage anyone who lives within two miles of their school to consider walking, cycling or scooting, if they can
- This will help to reduce pressure on buses and trams, for those who live a bit further away
- Those who do need to drive might consider parking a short distance away from the building and walking the rest of the way if possible, to reduce congestion and improve safety outside schools.

Plan your journey in advance, allow extra time and following the guidelines around reducing the spread of coronavirus.

Public transport operators have put in place a number of measures for passenger safety, including extra cleaning and markings to help social distance. Extra measures are in place to manage the return to school

The City Council has long been committed to making walking and cycling easier in the city, through cycle lanes, pedestrianised streets, and cycle hire. More recently we have received funding from the Government to reallocate roadspace to encourage people to walk and cycle. This includes the school streets scheme, which involves trialling car-free streets outside eight schools in the city.