

May 2020

Dear Parent/ Carer,

I hope that you and your families are safe and well. Coventry City Council would like to thank you for all of your support for schools and childcare providers during these challenging times, it is much appreciated.

Following the recent announcements from the Government around schools re-opening, I want to reassure you and provide some clarity, so that we are able to work together as we move forward. We are aware that many of you will be extremely concerned and will hear a lot of discussion and different opinions around this. Whilst we know how very important education is to you and your families, we are also aware that the safety and welfare of your children is paramount. So, we recognise the need for children to be back in school, yet we need to ensure that they are not put at increased risk of COVID-19 at this time.

The council has always worked in partnership with all city schools for the benefit of all our children and we have been working closely with them since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a consequence of this partnership and support we provide each other, most of our schools have remained open since lockdown was announced in March – even opening during the Easter holidays – to provide a service for some of the children, as the Government requested.

We are approaching the Government request to open schools for some year groups next month in exactly the same way.

Working with head teachers, governors and local unions, we are clear we cannot work towards a specific date to return for every school. What is important, is that our young people will be encouraged back into their school when it is ready to do so, in line with locally agreed principles and against the national tests set by Government. However, we are clear that schools will only do this when they have assessed it is the right time to do so, even if this isn't the immediate date the Government has announced.

Following Department for Education guidelines, which are strongly encouraging parents/carers to send children in the identified year groups back into school when the Government announce it is safe to do so, schools in the city will have already contacted you to understand the potential number of children who will want a place.

Once this process is complete, schools will contact you again to let you know when your child can return to school. This is complex, so it is unlikely that all schools will be able to reopen to all of the year groups proposed at the same time, but they will not be able to confirm this until all of the preparation work is complete.

We would like to assure you that we will continue to do our utmost to serve your children diligently and responsibly. Many of us are parents ourselves and we understand the level of concern and uncertainty that so many of you must be feeling.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Nelson".

Kirston Nelson
Director of Education and Skills

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Maton".

Cllr. Kevin Maton
Lead Member – Education and Skills