

Primary

Why has my school not opened for all of the children in reception, year 1 and year 6?

Any 're-opening' should be incremental and driven by a risk assessment undertaken by the setting. There are a number of reasons why some settings might be unable to provide a place for all of the children including:

- not having enough staff available (e.g. unable to be in the setting due to 'shielding')
- limited space in the setting to ensure social distancing, even in groups

The government advice is up to 15 children in a classroom, why is our school taking less?

School building and designs vary across the country. Where a Headteacher has completed a risk assessment and concluded that social distancing is not possible with 15 children in a room the local authority supports their decision to have fewer children.

Why has my school introduced rotas of classes/year groups, which is against government advice?

The government advice is to try and avoid rotas of classes and year groups. However, for example, in many small rural primary schools limited classroom space can make this difficult to manage. Additionally, many Shropshire children travel to school by bus and maintaining social distancing for whole classes/year groups of children may not be possible as they travel to school. The local authority will support schools with implementing a phased integration if this is required, as we strive to get children back into school.

How will transport be provided for my child?

Your child's school will liaise with the transport provider in relation to children who use school transport. There may be changes to timetables and these will be shared with you by the school.

Should my child wear a mask on school transport?

When deciding whether children wear a face covering on school transport, it is also important to remember:

- school transport is unlike public transport, in that it generally carries the same group of children to and from the same destination each day – this may help reduce the risk of cross infection
- children and staff won't be expected to wear face coverings in school
- it is important that those using face coverings are able to do so properly
- face coverings should not be used by children under the age of 3 or those who may find it difficult to manage them correctly

This implies that face coverings are not required on home to school transport.

At what time will my child be expected to arrive at school and at what time will they need to be collected?

Schools may organise a staggered drop off and collection time for pupils. This will be based on the assessment of risk. Parents should adhere to guidelines that have been set out by schools. Only one parent or carer should accompany the child to school to minimise risk.

Can I ask a friend to collect my child?

Parents should adhere to regulations relating to social distancing. Although you can now meet in groups of up to six people from different households, so long as you remain outdoors and follow social distancing guidelines, you should not share a private vehicle with anyone you do not live with.

My nursery/reception child won't understand about keeping 2 metres away from their friends, how will the school manage this risk?

It is understood by the government and schools that it would be impossible to keep young children apart, so the idea is to keep small groups of children together with the same adult/s, using the same equipment and resources in a so called "bubble". This attempts to limit as much as possible contact between groups of children. However, this may place certain restrictions on school activities. Children will not be able to mix freely with children in other groups.

What is the latest position on free school meals?

The current arrangements will continue for children entitled to benefits related free school meals but not attending school. This will mean that your child's school will continue to provide vouchers, hampers or lunches.

If your child is attending school, then they will receive a free school meal if they are entitled to a benefits related free school meal or a universal free school meal.

Will free school meal vouchers be available over the Summer holidays?

Yes. If your child or children are eligible for free school meals you will be able to claim vouchers for the 6 week summer holiday period.

Why has my school ended before and after-school childcare?

Schools are advised to ensure that children who are taught in groups during the day, remain in these groups during their time in school. As a result, schools might not be in a position to continue before/after school provision in order to keep children together.

Will schools use personal protective equipment (PPE)?

There is no need for schools to routinely use PPE. However, schools should use PPE in supporting children who may exhibit Covid19 symptoms during the school day, or on those occasions where schools are required to provide intimate care for pupils or first aid.

Will my child's school continue to set home learning if my child is not in school?

Many schools have been able to offer high-quality remote education opportunities and programmes over recent months. Now that primary schools are opening more widely, larger numbers of staff are needed to provide face-to-face teaching at school. This means that it may be more difficult to maintain the same level of remote education provision for pupils in the year groups who are not eligible to attend, or for those pupils in year groups who are eligible to attend but who themselves cannot.

Across Shropshire schools are striving to continue to support home learning for all children who are not attending the school.

I have changed my mind and I now want my child to return to school.

In all cases, parents should contact their child's school to determine whether a place can be provided. However, parents should bear in mind that schools may not be in a position to admit children as their ability to do so is based upon a risk assessment informed by guidance from the Department for Education.

Schools will still prioritise vulnerable and key worker children for school places, regardless of their year group. However, it may be the case that the school is unable to provide additional key worker places due to reasons of limited capacity. In such instances, this issue should first be discussed with the headteacher and further advice can be sought, where necessary, from the local authority. Nevertheless, it

may well be the case that the child cannot be admitted as a result of the need to limit numbers of pupils on the school site.

Who do I contact with questions about schools being open?

There is a Shropshire Council helpline for parents. The number is 0345 678 9008.