



Our Ref: CMcL/KT

Dear Parents/Carers

As you will be aware on 10<sup>th</sup> May the Prime Minister announced a roadmap outlining the Government's recovery plan as part of the Covid-19 response. This plan included information about the possible phased return for some children within school and suggested a timeframe commencing 1<sup>st</sup> June.

This letter is to outline how Stockport is responding locally to this announcement.

Throughout the crisis, almost all Stockport schools have been open, providing care for vulnerable children and the children of key workers. They have also been keeping in touch with vulnerable children who are not in school; providing food for those children who are entitled to benefit-related free school meals and providing home school activities. Over 2000 food boxes have been delivered by our schools to families in need and schools have been supporting both families and children as home learning has developed. We are extremely proud of the response from our schools, who have shown a very high level of care for their children and communities.

A similar level of commitment has been shown by our early years settings who have been particularly flexible and accommodating in their response. Again we are proud of the way in which this sector has responded to the challenges that Covid-19 has brought to Stockport.

The recent Central Government announcement marked a change of direction. Colleagues across the Local Authority are working hard to interpret this latest guidance and as you will appreciate, there is much to consider, not only from the DfE, but also Public Health England and our Health and Safety team. We are working with Senior Leaders to ensure that the classrooms and learning spaces are organised to reflect the safety advice within the guidance documents and current statutory provision. As you will appreciate every school/early years setting is different and will have conflicting pressures and expectations. We are working alongside Senior Leaders from across the sector to enable them to make local decisions as they arrive at a plan that is both safe and looks to meet the government's ambition to begin to bring more children back into school over time.

**As a local area we are clear that our leaders need time to think through these plans carefully in order that they can support pupil and staff safety. It is for this reason that we will begin to extend our provision in Stockport no earlier than June 8<sup>th</sup>.**

Primary schools will begin their work with two training days on June 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, without **any** children, to allow the staff to meet together for the first time since the start of Covid-19 in March. This time will allow staff teams to be appropriately trained and prepared in how to manage the new 'way of working' safely. As you will appreciate this will then enable them to be better prepared to provide a safe environment for your children as they return.

Over the coming days educational leaders will begin to communicate their local plans with you. It is highly likely that there will be a great deal of variation between the plans of

individual schools/early years settings. We would ask you to respect this. Decisions are being made purely to support the safest return for your children. We also need for you to be aware that these plans may need to change and these changes may happen quickly if illness or further guidance requires. None of us know how the Coronavirus outbreak could develop in Stockport and beyond so we are asking that schools and settings keep their plans under constant review to ensure that children, families and staff within schools stay safe.

Please be assured that we will do everything in Stockport, as a local area, to enable our children to return to school as quickly as we can. Our overriding principle is to ensure that the extension of our provision is as safe as it can be. We thank you for your patience.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Colin Foster  
Lead Member for Children and Education Services



Chris McLoughlin  
Director Children's Services