

County Hall Beverley East Riding of Yorkshire HU17 9BA Telephone (01482) 393939  
[www.eastriding.gov.uk](http://www.eastriding.gov.uk)

Deborah Myers Head of Children and Young People, Education and Schools

**Your Ref:**  
**Our Ref:** DM047/JMH  
**Enquiries to:** Deborah Myers  
**E-Mail:** [deborah.myers@eastriding.gov.uk](mailto:deborah.myers@eastriding.gov.uk)  
**Tel. Direct:** (01482) 391410  
**Date:** 21 May 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

As reported in the media yesterday, East Riding of Yorkshire Council wrote to all the county's schools advising that they should consider deferring the implementation of any wider opening to pupils until at least 8<sup>th</sup> June. This is subject to Government confirming that a phased return should commence from 1<sup>st</sup> June.

East Riding of Yorkshire Council's top priority is always the safety of our residents and children, and the safety, health and wellbeing of our workforce.

Throughout this pandemic, the Council has worked in collaboration with headteachers, the wider school community and consulted with Trade Unions to ensure the needs and welfare of all our children and young people remain at the centre of our planning. This planning and collaboration has been ongoing and more recently has focussed on the arrangements to increase pupil numbers to ensure safe systems of working.

Schools across the East Riding have remained open since 24<sup>th</sup> March to provide essential support and care to vulnerable children, children who have Education Health and Care Plans and for the children of critical key workers to enable their parents to provide essential services as part of the Coronavirus response. This has included staying open throughout holiday periods and at times when ordinarily schools would be closed. We are asking schools to maintain their current provision of childcare for critical keyworker children, those with an assigned social worker or children with an Education Health and Care Plan.

Since the Coronavirus outbreak, the Council has not only been constantly monitoring the national picture but carefully reviewing the local landscape as well. This review and assessment is ongoing. We are particularly mindful of the level of concern amongst families and the school community about the potential of schools opening to a greater numbers of pupils from 1<sup>st</sup> June. Should dates be published nationally which differ from 1<sup>st</sup> June, the Council will consider its advice in light of the local picture at that time, in discussion again with school leaders and consultation with Trade Unions.

We know that each and every one of our schools and academies which serve East Riding pupils and their families have put a great deal of thought and time into considering how a safe, cautious and phased return will work for them. We understand each school is different and will apply and adopt national and local guidance in a way that adheres to the requirements for safe working but also meets the needs of their pupils, staff, school site and individual context.

**Eoin Rush**

Director of Children, Families and Schools

Deferring any wider opening of our local schools by a week, should the Government determine that schools should start to welcome pupils from 1<sup>st</sup> June, will allow some additional time for schools to finalise their planning in light of any updated Government guidance and Public Health England advice. We are confident that this measured approach will ensure that schools are in an even stronger position and that parents and carers can be more confident when making decisions to send their children to school.

As part of our review of the East Riding context, we have also been considering what can be safely achieved on our home-to-school transport services for those pupils who rely on this to get to school. In line with Government guidance, we ask that you initially consider other modes of transport to minimise risk. This could be walking, cycling (where safe to do so) or driving your child to school yourself.

It has been acknowledged by Government that it may not always be possible to adhere to the 2-metre social distancing rule on transport. Council staff have analysed the impact of risk on transport and reviewed how best we can maintain our services. When the phased return of pupils starts, we aim to offer our usual transport services but reduce the number of pupils who usually travel on each individual vehicle to 50% where possible. However, we wish to assure you that no child will be left behind at a bus stop.

We appreciate that some parents may feel that the transport provided by the Council is not suitable for their child or children and that they therefore have the choice to fulfil this duty themselves. Unfortunately the Council is not in a position to consider or arrange alternatives to this revised offer. We know that parents and carers who choose to transport their own children to school often have to travel to more than one school. We would like to offer reassurance that no child will be disadvantaged for lateness in these circumstances.

Further guidance on how parents and carers can prepare their children for travelling on the Council home-to-school transport is available at:

<https://emergency.eastriding.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/#er-accordion-school-transport>

Thank you for your patience during this difficult time and for your understanding that safety is, and will continue to be, our number one priority.

Yours sincerely



Deborah Myers  
Head of Children and Young People, Education and Schools