Q1. Are all schools opening from September 2020?

A. The government is asking all schools to be ready to open to pupils from the start of the Autumn Term. Your school will be able to provide you with the details of their opening arrangements.

Q2. Will school uniform be required?

A. The government expects that all pupils attending school should wear the school’s uniform. However your school should advise if there have been any changes to their Uniform Policy.

Q3. What if I choose to keep my child at home, will this be classed as an unauthorised absence?

A. From September 2020 the government has re-applied the legislation regarding school Attendance and therefore absence will not be authorised if you keep your child at home. If you have concerns it is essential that you discuss this with your school and ask what provision they have in place to protect your child and family.

It is essential that you follow your school’s attendance policy and ensure your child attends regularly unless absences are due to an exceptional circumstance, eg. Illness, religious observance etc.

Q4. Will the school implement different opening and pick up times for each year group?

A. Your school should contact you with the details of their opening and pick up times.

Q5. Will breakfast and after school clubs be opening again?

A. Schools are being encouraged to provide these provisions from September 2020. Contact your school for further details.

Q6. Will children need to wear a face mask in school?

Current guidance (26 August 2020) in education settings where Year 7 are in attendance, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. As in the general approach, it will not usually be necessary to wear face coverings in the classroom, where protective measures already mean the risks are lower, and they may inhibit teaching and learning. Up to date information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education.

All Headteachers have the discretion to implement the above in their school and will need to communicate to parents should they choose to do so.

Q7. Are face coverings necessary on public transport for school pupils?

A. Yes, this is in line with the current guidance issued by the government.

Q8. Do face coverings need to be worn when using a dedicated school bus?

A. Current guidance states that pupils from Year 7 above should wear a face covering.
Q9. Will the school look different?

A. Each school will be making arrangements in line with their risk assessment and will provide parents/carers with details of any changes.

Q10. How can we prepare our children for a return to school?

- Encourage your children to wash their hands regularly
- Consider walking or cycling to school
- Make sure you read the information sent out by your school
- Explain social distancing and how this protects not only your child, but others too.
- Ensure that where possible they understand the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach.

However, if your child exhibits symptoms ensure that they stay at home and you must always contact the school to inform them so that they are aware, can support you and also protect the rest of the school.

Q11. What will the school do if there is a suspected Covid 19 case in the school?

A. All schools have the latest guidance from the government and must follow this.

Q12. What if my child or a close family member has been shielding?

A. Guidance has been issued by the government to pause shielding so children should be able to return to school. There will always be exceptions and these can be found in the following guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19.

Q13. Is it OK for my child to cycle or walk to school?

A. Yes, the government are supporting schools that encourage walking or cycling. Talk to your school about this.

Q14. What if I do not want my child to use public or designated transport?

A. If you decide not to use public or designated transport it will be your responsibility to transport your child to school yourself.

Q15. My child is starting Reception, what support are schools providing?

A. This will be down to each school. Schools should inform all parents of the arrangements that they are putting in place.

Q16. My school has informed that they will not be opening full-time for reception children in the first two weeks, is this permitted?

A. Each school will have in place their transition period and they should advise all parents of this process. If you have any concerns please discuss with your school.

Q17. My school has informed that they will be undertaking a phased return, is this permissible?

A. The government has issued guidance that allows schools to implement phased returns for a short period. If you have any concerns please discuss with your school.
Q18. My child is showing symptoms, what should I do?

A. If your child shows symptoms of Covid 19 or has tested positive in the last 7 days, or live in a household where someone has coronavirus symptoms, then please do not send them to school. They must be self-isolated immediately for 10 days (current guidance) and you must contact the school so that they can support you and protect the rest of the school.

Q19. If I do not send my child to school will this be an unauthorised absence?

A. All legal interventions have been re-applied and schools must follow their Attendance Policy. It is important that you discuss any absences with the school as soon as possible as without a valid reason the school may unauthorise the absence.

Q20. If I do not send my child to school will I be fined?

A. The government has reinstated the powers for Local Authorities to fine parents/carers for non-school attendance. It is down to the school to request a penalty notice from the Local Authority which is why it is important that you discuss your concerns and actions with the school at the earliest opportunity. This will allow the school to support you and your child in returning to full-time education.

Q21. Can I continue educating my child at home without withdrawing them from school?

A. No, from September the government guidance is for all children and young people, in all year groups, to return to school full-time from the beginning of the autumn term.

Schools will not provide the remote educational support (unless Covid 19 related) that they provided last term to children and young people at home when they are expected to be present in school. Therefore, the ‘home-schooling’ arrangements as they were at the height of the pandemic will not continue.

Withdrawing a child or young person from school to educate them at home is considered Elective Home Education (EHE). EHE requires parents or carers to take full responsibility for their child’s education, including all costs (like exam fees, books, stationery, internet costs, tuition fees etc.). Neither schools nor Local Authorities are required to provide any support to parents or carers who withdraw their child for EHE. Parents are also required to complete an online form detailing the education they will be providing for their child.

Where a child or young person is withdrawn from school for EHE, the school will delete the child from the Admissions and Attendance register and they will no longer be responsible for any aspects of the child’s education.

If the parent or carer wishes to return their child to school, they will have to follow the Local Authority’s Admissions process to secure a school place, which may not be the same school.

Q22. How is ‘home-schooling’ different to elective home education?

A. ‘Home-schooling’ was a combination of support from schools, online learning, and other resources parents and carers may have provided themselves during the pandemic. During ‘home schooling’ children remained on the school roll.

Elective Home Education (EHE) is when a child or young person is removed from a school roll and the parent or carer assumes full responsibility for their education.
Q23. How can I make a request for Elective Home Education?

A. Whilst parents and carers can choose to remove a child from education settings for ‘Elective Home Education’, it is important that they understand what this will involve. For further information, please see the Local Authority Elective Home Education page on the council webpage.