

REOPENING OF CITY OF YORK SCHOOLS

A letter to all staff on behalf of the York Schools and Academies Board (YSAB)

Monday 11 May 2020

Dear Colleague,

We hope that this message finds you safe and well.

York Schools and Academies Board represents *all* York's schools and academies.

First and foremost, all members of YSAB would like to thank you for everything that you have done so far to support our children through these extraordinary and demanding times. You have done a remarkable job which is hugely appreciated by parents, pupils and by those of us who lead the city's schools.

YSAB have been meeting three times a week since schools closed. We have been sharing our intelligence and ideas about how to manage education across the city during the pandemic. We have been supported by input from health & social care experts.

We are now planning how to reopen our schools to more students in response to yesterday's announcement by the government that its *conditional plan* is that on 1 June 2020, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils should return to school, with the further intent that secondary examination year groups should return to school at some time before the end of term.

As we scrutinise the government's guidance on reopening schools over the next few days, we want to reassure you that *our first priority is supporting staff and pupils*.

Importantly, we are intent upon supporting each other through this process. YSAB is working with the professional associations, the local authority, governors and trustees to ensure we move forward as safely and as supportively as we can.

By the end of Thursday of this week, 14 May 2020, we will have a clearer idea about how we will reopen schools and on that date we will update you on our progress.

We hope to offer clarity and consistency in the messages we deliver and, consequently, alleviate as much as possible any concerns you might have about the reopening of schools.

We know that over the coming days and weeks, guidance and instruction from the government will both change and develop; the collaborative planning we are currently doing will support the more detailed preparation we need to do to reopen schools.

As school leaders we all acknowledge the importance and seriousness of the decision to reopen schools and it is important to emphasise that we have the safety of students and staff as our priority. At all times we will be guided by Government advice and our key, overriding focus will be to ensure that schools are safe places for both staff and pupils.

Thank you again for your extraordinary efforts over the last few weeks; we look forward to a safe, sensible and professional return to school in the weeks ahead.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Tomsett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

John Tomsett (chair) on behalf of York Schools and Academies Board