

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020

Dear Families,

I hope that you are all safe, well and ready for your child to return to school on a full-time basis on Friday. We are all looking forward to seeing them again and please be assured that we have been working tirelessly to ensure that their transition back to school is as seamless as it can be. So, whether your child is returning to the same class, or a different class, phase or site, we are ready for them! We will, of course, continue to do everything we can to keep them safe at school, whilst ensuring that they return to a vibrant and happy environment. Despite the challenges that everyone faces, we will never lose sight of what really matters. We want your child to love being at school, surrounded by people that love being with them, and thank you for trusting us to do that.

The government released its latest guidance on the full opening of schools on 28<sup>th</sup> August and can be found below: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>. In line with the latest guidance and the changes to practice outlined in my letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> July, I would like to remind you that:

- On their return to school, your child will be based in their new class, with their new classmates and class staff. Classes will then be grouped into “bubbles”, consisting of 3 or 4 classes.
- Within bubbles, children will have the opportunity to mix safely with other children (for example, at lunchtimes and break times), but they will not mix with other children outside their bubble.
- Access to specialist spaces and resources will remain limited and risk assessed on a case-by-case basis. This includes, for example, access to trampolining, sensory rooms, soft play, etc.
- In order to get back into a structured routine, start and finish times will revert back to our usual 9.00am start and 3.20pm finish times. We will, however, introduce additional measures to reduce the potential for children and adults to congregate at arrival or departure times.
- Our catering provider, Nourish, will be providing a full hot menu at lunchtime.
- We will continue to work closely with SEN Transport to ensure that new transport arrangements run as smoothly as possible. Please be aware that every year, new routes can take a little while to become established and we will continue to do what we can to make the process as smooth as possible.
- We are working closely with our therapy colleagues and you will receive further information regarding access to therapy input and nursing support from Bromley Healthcare alongside this letter.
- For the first half term, there will be no off-site school trips, swimming or school-based hydrotherapy; nor will we be able to hold large gatherings, such as assemblies or special events. These will all be reviewed at the end of the first half term.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the safety of the whole Riverside School community has remained paramount and we have implemented a range of protective and preventative measures to

reduce risks as much as we can (although we cannot eliminate all risks). These measures have included, and will continue to include:

- Encouraging social distancing as far as is practicable, given our pupils' needs;
- Ensuring regular and increased cleaning in classrooms and shared spaces;
- Minimising the sharing of any resources and equipment and ensuring frequently touched objects and surfaces are cleaned and disinfected regularly;
- Encouraging frequent hand washing and good hygiene practices;
- Utilising outdoor space where possible;
- Keeping windows open to increase ventilation;
- Providing visual reminders and prompts to support children in their understanding of new practices (which we hope will also support their understanding about similar measures in the community).

Provision will be reviewed on a regular basis and will follow medical advice. If advice changes, we have a responsibility to respond accordingly and we will keep you fully informed. There are a few questions that remain as important now as before, so please familiarise yourselves with the information below:

### **What should I do if my child or anyone at home has Coronavirus symptoms?**

If this is the case, your child should not come into school and as per the current NHS and government advice, you should keep them at home for a period of seven days. Where symptoms continue after seven days, or begin to worsen, you should call 111. If someone in your child's household has symptoms, your child must self-isolate for 14 days from the day the other person's symptoms started. This is because it can take 14 days for symptoms to appear.

### **What will happen if a child or staff member develops coronavirus symptoms at school?**

If a child or staff member develops Coronavirus symptoms, they will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days, and the rest of the household should self-isolate for 14 days. We understand that some children's temperatures can fluctuate and we therefore also have a clear protocol in place to ensure that temperature checks are taken in a robust and child-centred way. All staff and children who are attending school will have access to a test if they display Coronavirus symptoms and should not return to school before the results of the test are known.

### **What will happen if a child or staff member tests negative?**

If a child or staff member tests negative, they can return to school and their fellow household members can end their self-isolation.

### **What will happen if a child or staff member tests positive?**

If a child or staff member tests positive, the school will contact the local health protection team and they will carry out a risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious. Those children / adults will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person. Other household members

do not need to self-isolate unless the child or staff member they live with subsequently develops symptoms.

### **My child has been shielding. Are they able to return to school in September?**

We know that some pupils have been shielding and are no longer required to shield. For pupils with the most complex medical needs who are under the care of specialist health services, the RCPCH advice is discuss their care with health professionals before returning to school in September. In such cases, please ensure all advice received is passed onto the school in a timely fashion. If you would like more information, our colleagues at Wellchild recently hosted a Back to School session and this can be viewed at <https://www.wellchild.org.uk/2020/08/20/back-to-school-webinar-addresses-key-questions-for-families-of-seriously-ill-children/>

In other news, we are delighted to be welcoming our new pupils and families to our third site, Riverside West Wickham and this will take our pupil population to just over 300. It goes without saying that our commitment to providing you, and your child, with a profoundly personalised approach to their education remains exactly the same. As we increase in size, so does our ability and capacity to do more and more exciting things, and despite the current challenges, The Riverside Way is to remain positive, optimistic and ambitious and we will always act in accordance with our values:

*Aspiration Resilience Creativity Humility Integrity Trust Enthusiasm Courage Teamwork*

Alongside these, our approach in the weeks and months ahead will be "Safety First" and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher or a member of the Leadership Team: Amy Price and Charlotte Downs, Assistant Headteachers, will be heading up our primary provisions across all the three sites and their time will be split between SPC, Beckenham and West Wickham. Kerry Reed and Clare Collett, Assistant Headteachers, will be heading up our secondary provision (KS3, 4 & 5) and will be based at the SPC site. Katie Strutt, Phase Leader, will be based at Riverside Beckenham on a full-time basis; Danni Costanza, Phase Leader, will be based at SPC (Primary) and Lucy Godley, Phase Leader, will be based at SPC (Secondary).

We will, of course, keep you fully informed should any local or national guidance change, but as it stands, here's to the new term – we can't wait to welcome your child back to Riverside School.

Kindest regards,



Steve Solomons  
Headteacher