

17th December 2021

Dear Families,

So, today is the last day of what has been another eventful term at Riverside School. It would be fair to say that the final month hasn't quite been the one we had anticipated, and this applies not only to school life, but everyday life for all of us. I hope that you, our Riverside families, haven't been too adversely affected by the changing COVID situation and that whatever the next few weeks bring, that you all stay as safe and well as possible during the festive period and beyond.

Whilst the last few weeks have brought their challenges, we have always tried to hold on to things that really matter and we have aimed to balance our commitment to provide your children with the sorts of school experiences that they love, with our responsibility to keep our whole school community as safe as possible. We were pleased to be able to offer some live events whilst others were filmed and I am delighted that we are able to share three performances with you in time for Christmas. Please find the Riverside Beckenham Show [HERE](#); the Riverside SPC Primary Show [HERE](#) and the Staff Panto [HERE](#) and on behalf of everyone who worked so hard to make them happen, we really hope you enjoy them.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank those staff who are moving on at Christmas – to Vicki (Giraffes TA); Jude (Parade Class teacher) and Jos (Dolphins Class teacher), who are both taking some time out to pursue further study and training as they both embark on new career paths and Kirsty (Rabbits Class teacher), who is relocating. We are sending you all our best wishes for the future and on behalf of all the children and families you have supported so well over the years, a huge thank you.

Thank you also to everyone who took part in our Christmas Raffle, and with over 50 prizes now distributed, we hope you were one of the lucky winners. We raised £1,036 – a tremendous effort!

In line with our commitment to communicate frequently and openly with you about all COVID-related matters, I can confirm that we have had fifteen positive COVID cases this week. Of these cases, ten have been at Riverside SPC, four have been at Riverside West Wickham, and one has been at Riverside Beckenham.

You will be aware from last week's letter that if there are two or more positive cases in one class, this is considered to be an "outbreak" and additional measures are put in place to try and minimise the risk of further transmission. Over the past week, there have been two or more cases in two classes across the school (one Riverside West Wickham class and one Riverside SPC Secondary class). Last week, four classes had two or more cases, so in total, six classes out of our total number of 35 classes have been affected in the past fortnight. For families with children in the classes that have been affected, I would like to thank you for supporting the measures we have had to introduce.

Just a reminder that if there is **more than one** positive case in your child's class (meaning that there is a cluster or "outbreak" in the class):

- We will ask you to arrange for your child to have a PCR test as soon as possible (and if you are able, to collect your child for this reason).
- We will ask that your child remains at home until you receive confirmation of the test result. If the result is negative, your child can return to school and if the result is positive, your child will need to stay at home and self-isolate for ten days. Please let us know as soon as the result comes through.

- If the PCR result is negative, we will also ask you to carry out daily lateral flow testing for your child, so that they can continue to come into school (as we know that COVID can develop several days after the last contact with a positive case).
- If the daily lateral flow test result is negative, they can come into school but if it is positive, they must have a PCR test to confirm the result. They must not come into school until the result of the PCR test is known. If the PCR test result is negative, they can return to school and if it is positive, they must stay at home and self-isolate for ten days.
- If you feel that your child will not be able to tolerate a daily lateral flow test, then we would ask that your child stays at home until the tenth day of their last contact with the positive case in their class (we will provide details as necessary).
- In addition to any of the above, if your child has COVID symptoms, please do not send them into school and arrange for them to have a PCR test.
- In classes where there have been more than one positive case, there will be a small number of additional control measures in place in class, primarily around pupils not mixing freely with other classes.

Whilst none of us know how the next couple of weeks will pan out, as it stands, we plan to continue with these arrangements when we return to school in January, Should the guidance change during the holidays, we will of course let you know on our return.

At the end of last week's letter, I reiterated the reason we are all here, namely to provide your children with school experiences that they look forward to, enjoy, and remember, and to provide you with the confidence that their time in school is filled with joy, friendships and fun. Despite the continuing challenges that everyone is facing, we will never lose sight of the important stuff. Together, as a school community, we will keep going strong. We will, as the saying goes, keep calm and carry on, and together, we will get through this.

Wishing you all a safe, healthy and happy Christmas and looking forward to seeing your wonderful children again on Wednesday 5th January.

With very best wishes,



Steve Solomons
Headteacher