

22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022

Dear Families,

I hope that you are well and have had a good couple of weeks.

It has been great to welcome your children back to school this week and we will send out a list of planned Summer Term events soon. In the meantime, we are pleased to be able to offer swimming experiences to pupils on all three sites this term, using local community pools as well as our own hydrotherapy pool at Riverside SPC. For those of you whose children use the hydrotherapy pool, you will be aware that we have had to deal with a number of recent issues and please be assured that we continue to invest significant amounts of time and money to ensure our pool can remain open. All of the challenges in recent months have been beyond our control and we will continue to prioritise the pool as an extremely important curriculum resource for our pupils. We thank you for your understanding when we have had to close the pool temporarily to undertake emergency maintenance works.

You will be aware that, as a school, we have committed to keep you fully informed about all COVID-19 related matters since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020. We had our first positive case in November 2020 and from that point onwards, you will have received a weekly letter informing you of case numbers across all three sites, outbreak measures, testing arrangements, vaccination opportunities and information about our changing school protocols, amongst many other matters. I hope that these weekly letters have provided you with the information you have needed to feel fully informed during this period.

In the [next steps for living with COVID-19](#) guidance published on 29<sup>th</sup> March, a number of changes were outlined regarding the management of COVID-19 and I thought you may find it useful to know how these will affect us at Riverside School. The most relevant points include:

- Regular asymptomatic testing is no longer recommended in any education or childcare setting, including special schools, meaning that we no longer have access to test kits for our staff.
- Free testing for COVID-19 has ended for most people and is no longer available at pharmacies, test sites, community centres or schools.
- The NHS COVID-19 [symptoms in children](#) have been updated to include: a high temperature (meaning you feel hot to touch on your chest or back – you do not need to measure your temperature); a new, continuous cough (meaning coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours); a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste; shortness of breath; feeling tired or exhausted; an aching body; a headache that lasts longer than usual; a sore throat; a blocked or runny nose; loss of appetite; diarrhoea; feeling sick or being sick.

- Children who have symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19, should follow the [UKHSA guidance](#). The guidance that we are adopting at Riverside School is that if your child has symptoms of COVID-19 and either has a high temperature or is not well enough to attend school, they should stay at home. They can return to school when they feel better or do not have a high temperature and the guidance also states that if your child has mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat or mild cough, and they feel well enough, they can attend school.
- It is not recommended that children and young people are tested for COVID-19 unless directed to by a health professional. If a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result, they should stay at home for at least 3 days after the day of the test. After 3 days, if they feel well and do not have a high temperature, they can return to school. The guidance states that the shorter time span is because children and young people tend to be infectious to other people for less time than adults.
- Outbreak reporting is no longer a statutory requirement.

Due to the lack of testing for COVID-19, we are therefore unable to provide you with figures on a weekly basis and this will be a change to what we have been able to provide you with over the past 18 months. However, I will continue to write every Friday with a general update and to share what we are up to, COVID or non COVID-related. One such exciting initiative is this year's Family Project and we really would love as many of you as possible to take part. Details are on the flyer overleaf and we look forward to receiving your expressions of interest soon.

So, as we start the new term, we will continue to maintain the balance between keeping our whole school community as safe as possible whilst ensuring our days are filled with joy, excitement and adventure. I wrote in my last letter that we will make this term a term to remember and nothing has changed. Quite simply, your wonderful children deserve nothing less.

With very best wishes,



Steve Solomons  
Headteacher

# Family Project 2022



We are delighted to announce that our 2022 **Family Project** will be returning face-to-face this Summer. We have some really exciting ideas that we'd love to share with you and please know that you DO NOT have to believe you are a born singer or dancer - we just want you to bring yourself to the Project.

Please join us on Wednesday 11th May at 10am at our first relaxed, no-pressure session, where we will share some thoughts and would love to hear yours. Sessions will be at Riverside SPC, but families from all three sites are very warmly welcomed.

Starting: Wednesday 11th May 2022  
Time: 10am - 12pm  
Weekly dates: May 11th, 18th, 25th, June 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, July 6th  
Performance: Wednesday 13th July 2022  
Venue: Riverside SPC, Main Road, Orpington, BR5 3HS

Please complete the expression of interest form below, by Friday 29th April, and return to Chantal Cook, Head of Expressive Arts, via contact books. *Thank you*

I/we (name/s) \_\_\_\_\_ would like to take part in the Family Project 2022.

My child \_\_\_\_\_ is in \_\_\_\_\_ (class).

My contact number is \_\_\_\_\_

My email address is \_\_\_\_\_

