

Full Reopening of Lower School

Dear parents and carers, we are very excited about fully re-opening the lower school and welcoming back all the children on **Thursday (3rd September)** next week.

As a school community we will be seeking to look after one another, particularly those feeling anxious, clinically vulnerable or who have suffered health, loss of loved ones or financial difficulties. The measures we have set out are there to help promote an environment of safety and care. Everyone will have differing excitements and trepidations around returning to school. If you feel your child may be in need of additional support please get in touch with your class teacher, David as DSL or myself.

We truly want children to return to as normal an experience as possible while keeping all safe and being respectful of one another.

As noted in our previous communication, although we plan to limit contact between classes, each class will no longer operate as a completely separate bubble with its own dedicated staff. We plan instead to operate 'phase bubbles' (separating kindergarten and lower school) to allow for some movement of staff between classes where needed. For Lower School this means that our subject specialist lessons and after school clubs can go ahead and that late afternoon provision will still be possible in Kindergarten.

Helping prepare your children for their return to school this autumn – key messages:

- School will return to its normal hours, 8:30-3pm and will follow the previously familiar timetable pattern of Main Lesson, snack/break, subjects lessons, lunch/break, subject lessons, end of day
- Main Lesson will start promptly at 8:30am, so all pupils need to arrive in school **between 8:15-8:25am**
- Rowan Tree, Class 5 and Class 7/8 will enter through the side gate and go straight to their classroom; Pinetrees and Class 6 will enter through the main school entrance, and go straight to their classrooms
- There will continue to be a one-way system within the school, it will be important to follow this at all times during school hours
- Teachers will be maintaining distance between themselves
- The additional expectations for pupils introduced in the summer term will continue to apply:
 - I will stay with my 'learning bubble' (this means no contact between Kindergartens and the Lower School, and very limited contact between classes within Lower School)
 - I will remain in my place when working
 - I will only use my own equipment
 - I will try and keep a '**stretch**' away from my friends
 - I will wash my hands regularly
 - I will try and keep my hands away from my face
 - I will try and catch sneezes and coughs (Catch it, Bin it!)
 - I will tell a grown up if I feel ill

- The school kitchen will not be providing meals for Lower School for now, and so we ask that all pupils bring in their own snack and lunch, as well as their own water bottle.
- Final arrangements for break-times will be confirmed next week, this will involve some use of designated areas and/or staggered timings
- At the end of the day, Rowan Tree, Class 5 and Class 7&8 will go out onto their patios to wait to be called to the side gate. Pinetrees and Class 6 will go out through the main entrance and wait on the sheltered patio outside the community room to be collected (the tree will no longer be used as a pick up point, because the pool has now reopened and there will be additional vehicles in the carpark). Parents, please arrive promptly at 3pm and leave the carpark as soon as you have collected your child(ren) – thank you.

Attendance/illness: in line with government guidance, our expectation is that all pupils will be returning to school and normal attendance reporting will resume.

However, if your child develops any of the symptoms of Coronavirus (new continuous cough, fever, or loss of taste or smell), they must not come to school. You will need to notify the school and self-isolate, along with the rest of your household, for 10 days at home, following the [Stay at Home guidance](#). Anyone with symptoms should get a test to check if they have coronavirus as soon as possible ([LINK to testing information](#) and [Link to NHS Test and Trace information](#)).

If a member of staff or a student becomes symptomatic whilst at school, the office will be notified and they will contact someone to collect the individual and isolate them in the Community Room until they can leave or be collected. There is now no longer a need for anyone other than an individual's immediate family to self isolate in the event of an individual becoming symptomatic.

At this time, no one that is unwell should be in school. If your child is unwell with non-coronavirus symptoms, they must stay at home until they feel better. Any student that is showing signs of ill-health in school will be reported to the office so that parents can be contacted to collect them.

Physical (social) Distancing

Physical distancing will be observed at all times between staff. Guidance for encouraging distancing between pupils remains the same as the summer term (in Lower School this means encouraging pupils to keep a 'stretch' apart and thinking ahead when planning activities to ensure that distancing is maintained wherever possible). Across Lower School teachers should maintain distance with pupils where possible and appropriate.

Our strategy appreciates that, *“both the approaches of **separating groups and maintaining distance** are not ‘all-or-nothing’ options, and will still bring benefits even if implemented partially”*. This means that, even within our phase ‘bubbles’, where possible classes should remain separate, working in their own rooms or outside and avoiding unnecessary travel around the school building.

Hygiene & PPE

All students will be encouraged to regularly wash their hands. The minimum for this should be on arrival at school, when coming into school from breaks, before eating, after using the toilet, and before leaving school at the end of the day. We will ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach.

PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases, including where an individual child or young person becomes ill with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms while at schools, and only then if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.

If a pupil or staff member wishes to wear a face covering at any time they will be supported to do so.

Additional measures:

- Continuing with enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often
- Ventilating rooms and learning outside wherever possible
- Using designated toilets
- Pupils will have their own personal equipment for regularly used items (eg. stationery) but classroom equipment such as books and games can now be shared within the group though they should be regularly cleaned
- Following a one-way system and limiting movement around the building

Parents:

Please can parents support us by arriving on time and modelling social distancing at pick-up and drop off. Children should avoid bringing in any items from home unless requested to do so by teachers. Thank you.

We are liaising with the pool about arrangements around pick up time, and will update you accordingly if plans need to change.

We will also share our new risk assessment that will take into account all of the changes in guidance.

Thank you for your patience and flexibility as we tread this road together; guidance may be revised and circumstances change, but the safety and wellbeing of our children and staff will remain our top priority.

Wishing everyone a joyful, peaceful and healthy year ahead.

Warm wishes

Sarah

On behalf of SLT and the Lower School Team