

27<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you all are well and that the summer break offered you opportunities to rest and spend time with your families.

We have been very busy in the past few weeks planning, completing new and detailed risk assessments, and working out exactly what school will look like and feel like when your child returns. We now have new carpets in the main school corridor and our hall has been painted. We have also had some extensive work done on our flat roofs which were leaking. The school is looking lovely and ready for the children to return!

We have worked hard to consider how we group pupils together, ensure that we reduce contact between different groups of pupils, and keep the stringent cleaning and disinfecting processes we already have in place to ensure that our school is as safe as it can be for your child.

Government guidance for Primary Schools has changed very little over the Summer so the information included in our July letter to parents about Rackham's reopening remains entirely relevant. Please ensure all parents have read and understood the information shared in that letter. It can be found on our website under the 'Parent' tab in the 'Coronavirus latest' section and is linked [HERE](#). We have also attached it to this email for you. It is particularly important that parents read and understand that **no bags, pencil cases or lunch boxes are permitted and that staggered entry times must be adhered to.**

### **School meals**

Our booking system for school dinners has been improved and lunches should now be booked via MCAS. For the first three weeks of term we are only offering the packed lunch option. Packed lunches **MUST** be booked in advance. Packed lunches consist of a sandwich, fruit, savoury item and dessert. For years 3-6 meals cost £2.30 and should be paid for in advance.

Years 1 – 6: If you require a school meal, please login to your MCAS account and click on the 'Dinners' option on the left-hand side. You will then be able to choose a sandwich option for each day. Clicking the 'Next week' button at the top of the page will take you to the following week. We will assume that your child will bring a packed lunch from home if you do not book on MCAS.

Please ensure you book the meals required for the **first three weeks of term** before midday on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September.

Reception children: Meal booking will be available from Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September. Please follow the instructions above to book meals for w/c 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> September. Please ensure meals are booked by midday on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September.

### **Morning snack and milk**

Morning snack will be available for Reception and KS1 children as usual. We would encourage families to use this option rather than bringing their own snack into school. KS2 children are permitted to bring either a fruit or vegetable snack in a disposable bag if they wish.

Due to Covid19 safety precautions, milk will be provided for Reception children only until further notice.

Please find below some further clarification of questions we anticipate parents may have at this time:

### **What hygiene measures are in place? What are you doing to keep the school clean?**

- We have hygiene kits in each classroom, including cleaning products and equipment. Surfaces are cleaned regularly, and all equipment is cleaned in between use.
- We have additional cleaning throughout the school day.
- We have removed lots of equipment from classrooms to ensure surfaces are easily cleaned.
- Most soft furnishings have been removed from classrooms.
- Children are expected to wash their hands multiple times throughout the day; members of staff will be available to support and supervise handwashing where it is appropriate, and we have visual reminders in all the toilets and sink areas about good handwashing.
- We have hand sanitising stations throughout the school and children are expected to use this regularly (in addition to handwashing). It is not necessary for children to bring their own hand sanitiser from home.
- We are awaiting further guidance from the local authority about face masks and will correspond with you as soon as we hear more. Some staff members may be wearing transparent face visors at different points throughout the school day, according to individual risk assessments.

### **How will you make sure children are socially distant with each other?**

- Playtimes will be staggered so that fewer children are outside the classrooms. This way, the groups will not routinely mix with each other. Each group will have their own play equipment in their zone.
- We recognise that social distancing with the younger children is a challenge so we will remind them regularly about it, but we cannot guarantee that it can be maintained. The government guidance states that schools do not need to insist on social distancing with the younger children. We want our children to learn through play and interaction with others.

### **How will staff social distance?**

- Staff will continue to maintain 1m+ social distancing wherever possible. Our staffroom will not be used for staff to congregate and our school office is out of bounds to all but a few members of our team.
- We will not allow visitors or parents into the school building in order to maintain good social distancing, however we are still available to talk to parents either over the phone, email or online meetings such as Teams or Zoom.

### **What will the classrooms look like?**

- The classrooms do look a bit sparser than they usually do, this is so that the surfaces are easily cleaned.
- In Years 1 to 6, the desks have been arranged into front facing rows.
- Teachers are planning learning activities that reduce the need for close face to face interaction.
- In Reception and Year 1, we will allow a more 'free flow' approach to the provision so that the children can learn through play. In Year 1, the children will sit in front facing rows as part of their transition from Reception. They will be allowed to sit on the carpet in small groups but will be expected to distance themselves as much as possible.

### **What equipment will be available to the children? What will they need to bring from home?**

- All children will be given their own pencil case with their own equipment because they are not allowed to share equipment such as pens and pencils.
- Any equipment that does need to be shared will be cleaned thoroughly in between uses.
- Children will be expected to bring a named water bottle to school. This will stay on their desk to reduce movement around the classroom.
- PE kits will not be required for any children in week commencing 7<sup>th</sup> September. After this, children must wear their PE kits to school on the days they have PE lessons. This is because inevitably, good social distancing cannot be maintained whilst changing and we anticipate the wearing of PE kits to school will also help families with the necessity to wash school uniforms regularly. Class teachers will inform you of PE days during the first week.

### **Do the normal rules and expectations still apply?**

- Absolutely! We have very high expectations for behaviour and attitude at Rackham and we expect all children to meet these. Some children may need additional support and guidance to meet the expectations and we have a team of staff who can provide this.
- It would be very useful for parents to begin to talk to their child about the school expectations and routines before the start of the Autumn Term particularly as many routines have inevitably changed during recent months.
- If the usual term time bedtime routine has not been maintained, we strongly recommend parents begin to re-establish this important routine as soon as possible.

### **How will you make sure the children settle into their new class and teachers? How are you going to support their wellbeing after such a difficult time?**

- All staff have had recent training in supporting children who have experienced trauma. We have used this training to help us to plan how we will support all the children from September. Trauma isn't always caused by a 'one-off' catastrophic event like a bereavement; it could be the anxiety caused by not seeing friends, adjusting to a new routine or it could be linked to concerns the children may have over recent events.
- Miss. Smith and Mrs. Pooley will be working hard to identify and support pupils who may need additional help settling back into school life.

### **How will you help the children to 'catch up'?**

- Government funding for 'catch up' work has not yet been distributed and we are working closely with the Local Authority to ensure we are able to access all the funding available to us for this. We will share further information with you all once it is provided.
- We have registered our interest with the National Tutoring Programme and Teach First and will consider all options in due course when we know more about the funding available.
- Our priority is around wellbeing and health.
- When the children have settled in, their teachers will assess them all and will plan support for anyone who needs additional help in Reading, Writing and Maths.
- All teachers and leaders have reviewed the curriculum and adjusted their plans so that it enables the children to repeat aspects they may need to, but also supports rapid progress.

### **What happens if my child gets ill at school?**

- No child or adult showing signs of infection are allowed on the premises.
- Staff and pupils are required to have immediate tests if they show symptoms. If a child is sent home with symptoms, we expect parents to arrange a test for the child. We will request evidence of a negative test result (i.e. the text message from the NHS) before the child is allowed back to school.
- Any child who displays any symptoms of Covid must be collected immediately and we expect parents and families to have provision in place if they are not based in the local area during the school day.
- The adult supervising the child will wear full PPE clothing when dealing with a suspected case; this includes a face mask, face shield/ visor, apron and gloves.
- If a pupil in your child's bubble becomes ill and tests positive for Covid, we will inform you immediately.
- If any child in school tests positive for Covid, every child and member of staff in their group will be required to self-isolate for 14 days.
- If a member of a child's household tests positive for Covid, the child and the household members must self-isolate for 14 days. The other children and staff in the child's group do not have to self-isolate.

### **What if I live with an extremely clinically vulnerable household member? What if my child is still shielding?**

- If any families have a household member who will continue to shield after the 1st August, please contact the school office so that an appropriate risk assessment can be carried out.
- The government guidance states that all children will be expected to attend school from September and we want to work with any parents who are worried to reassure you that we are taking every precaution to keep our community safe.

We understand that some of you and your children will be anxious about returning after some months out of school. If any parents have any questions, please contact the school office and we will endeavour to answer your queries. Thanks to fantastic communication between our teachers and families throughout the period of home learning, we have a very good understanding of the barriers our pupils are facing and look forward to working with them again to overcome any learning challenges they may be facing.

Our priority is the health and safety of our school community and we hope that, by reading this document, all parents and families are reassured that we are taking every possible measure to create a happy, healthy and safe learning environment for all.

I look forward to seeing you all soon. It will be so lovely to see the Rackham family reunited.

Yours sincerely

Bridget Harrison

