



4<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

A warm welcome back to school as we start the Autumn Term 2020. A special warm welcome to all the new families joining our Rackham Community.

There is no doubt that this is the most challenging start to a school year I have experienced in over 15 years of primary education, but I know with a strong team and supportive parents and community we will get through it together. Our school is looking excellent and our teachers are well – prepared and excited for the term ahead.

### **Home School Agreement:**

Our Home School Agreement was altered last term due to the new procedures and expectations that Covid have necessitated. We have attached it to this email and ask for all parents to read it carefully with their children before returning to school. Instead of asking parents to return these signed agreements to us, ***we will assume that all parents of children who return to school have read, understood and agreed to the statements included on the Home School Agreement.***

### **Guide For Parents:**

The Local Authority have recently produced a brilliant guide for parents of children returning to school with some very useful tips and we have attached it to this email. Where possible, please can all parents take the time to read this before Monday.

### **Respiratory Hygiene and Face Coverings:**

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important, so we continue to have tissues and lidded bins available in the school to support pupils and staff to follow this routine. As with hand cleaning, schools must ensure younger children and those with complex needs are helped to get this right, and all pupils understand that this is now part of how school operates.

Public Health England does not (based on current evidence) recommend the use of face coverings in schools for children aged 11 and under. This evidence will be kept under review. They are not required in schools as pupils and staff are mixing in consistent groups, and because misuse may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission. There may also be negative effects on communication and thus education.

We are encouraging school staff to wear face coverings/visors in situations where it may be hard to socially distance. For example, when doing gate duty, when working 1:1 with a child for a prolonged period, and when seeing their class in and out of school.

We are trying to put every measure in place to ensure that the school stays safe and open, and we are asking any adults (or teenagers) dropping off or collecting children to wear a face covering when on the school site. Although we have staggered start and finish times, there will still be a lot of people on the school site and we want to minimise the risk of transmission. Thank you for respecting this decision.

**Staggered Entry and Exit from School Reminder:**

At the start and end of the day, we kindly request that only one parent/carer accompany their child/children to school and observe social distancing on the playground at all times. It is imperative that pupils arrive at the correct specified time and that adults do not meet in groups during drop – off and pick – up times. We respectfully ask that parents leave the school site swiftly so we can help to maintain social distancing measures. At collection time, please do not arrive early to collect your child. You will notice markings on the ground as you enter the premises. These were used for our June reopening to remind parents of the need to distance.

If they wish, Year 5 and 6 children can leave the school site unaccompanied or parents can wait on Main Street to collect them.

Where an older sibling is collecting a child from school, we ask that the parent email [office@rackham.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@rackham.cambs.sch.uk) in advance to give permission.

If your child becomes distressed at the start of day, staff will try to coax them into school using our usual strategies. However we would suggest if your child is too distressed, they return home as staff will not be able to physically manoeuvre any pupils. We intend to play some cheerful music in the morning to help ease pupil (and parent) anxiety and some staff will be outside to greet pupils.

As we are continuing to use both gates in the car park, the school car park will remain closed to all parents and carers at all times. This includes our disabled parking bays. You will notice that our school roof is still being repaired as unfortunately our contractors have overrun on this project. There remains extensive scaffolding around the school and two cabins on the front car park. These pose no risk to our pupils, and should hopefully be finished within a couple of weeks. We thank you for your patience with this.

**Parent Contact:**

We need to protect all staff including the office staff so the school office will remain closed. Parents must not enter the school building without prior arrangement. If you have any queries, you must telephone or email the school office or the classteachers. All parent/ teacher communication will be conducted by telephone/email. Please see the class email addresses below:

Ash – ashclass@rackham.cambs.sch.uk  
Larch – larchclass@rackham.cambs.sch.uk  
Beech – beechclass@rackham.cambs.sch.uk  
Chestnut – chestnutclass@rackham.cambs.sch.uk  
Hazel – hazelclass@rackham.cambs.sch.uk  
Elm – elmclass@rackham.cambs.sch.uk  
Sycamore – sycamoreclass@rackham.cambs.sch.uk  
Cedar- cedarclass@rackham.cambs.sch.uk  
Oak- oakclass@rackham.cambs.sch.uk  
Willow- willowclass@rackham.cambs.sch.uk

**Medical Forms:**

It is imperative that if your child needs any medication in school (including inhalers) that you fill in the medical form (attached to this email) and return it to school ASAP. Inhalers and medication should be put into a clearly named box with the medical form and handed to the class teacher.

**Track and Trace:**

As children in all year groups return to school full-time, we must ensure that we put in place a range of protective measures to reduce the risk of transmission. We will also be engaging fully with the NHS Test

& Trace process, and will work closely with the local Health Protection Team of Public Health England and the local authority to ensure that any confirmed cases are reported without delay.

**Where there is a possible case of coronavirus in school:**

If a child or member of staff develops symptoms of coronavirus, the individual concerned will be sent home and asked to self-isolate for 10 days. They will be asked to arrange a test at the earliest convenience (either by visiting a test centre, or by requesting a home test kit) and to share the results with the school.

The parents/carers of other children within the bubble will be sent a letter to notify them of this situation however, the individual will not be named and personally identifiable information will not be included. All other children within the bubble will be able to continue to attend school as normal whilst the test is carried out and until the result is known.

The wider school community will not receive this letter.

**Where there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in school:**

If a child or member of staff tests positive for coronavirus, the individual concerned will be asked to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the date when their symptoms appeared.

If they have tested positive whilst not experiencing symptoms but develop symptoms during the isolation period, they should restart the 10 day isolation period from the day they develop symptoms.

Other members of their household or support bubble should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms and should continue this period of isolation even if they too have been tested and have received a negative test result.

The school will work with the Health Protection Team of Public Health England to carry out a risk assessment to determine who else, if anyone, also needs to isolate.

The parents/carers of other children within the bubble will be sent a letter to notify them of this situation, and will be advised of any additional measures which are required. Again, the individual will not be named and personally identifiable information will not be included.

**What you can do:**

If your child, a household member or a member of your support bubble develops any of the following symptoms, we would ask that you **notify the school immediately** and arrange a test by visiting <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> or by phoning 119.

- A high temperature
- A new and persistent cough
- A loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Thank you all for taking the time to read this letter and our previous correspondence. There is a lively, positive feel in school as teachers and staff prepare and we are all really excited about seeing our pupils again. I understand completely that many parents will be feeling apprehensive about the start of term but I feel confident that we have done everything we can to make our school a safe place.

Kind regards,  
Bridget Harrison

*J. Harrison*

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