



Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Further to the confirmation that the country will be moving to Step 4 of the Government's Road Map out of Lockdown, I am writing to you to share our plans on how Rackham will respond.

Since September 2020, there are five pupils from Rackham who have tested positive for Coronavirus, but thanks to the vigilance and dedication of all staff, pupils and parents in our community, we have prevented the virus from spreading across school and therefore, there has only been one bubble closure for just five days. I am sure you will agree, this demonstrates just how excellent our community have been at keeping each other safe and following the necessary rules over the past 18 months. Four out of the five cases did not result in any isolation for other pupils whatsoever. This is something we should all feel very proud of.

I am immensely grateful to the way our staff and parents have worked with us to meet recent demands of school life and I would like to thank you all for your flexibility and adaptability as we have moved in and out of lockdowns over the last 18 months. In particular, I would like to extend a special thank you to Mrs. Lowes and Mrs. Clifford who have been managing our track and trace system in school for staff, pupils and parents alike. They have been nothing short of phenomenal. There is no doubt in my mind that were it not for the continual efforts of staff, pupils and our parent community we would have been required to close many more bubbles and cause more disruption to our children's learning.

### Our approach

As mentioned in our correspondence to parents last week [here](#), we are all delighted that we are getting closer to what we once knew as normal, but we are adopting a cautious approach. This is particularly important given that rates of infection are increasing, especially amongst school aged young people. As we enter the final week of the school year, we very much want to avoid children, families and staff having to isolate as the summer break starts.

### Maintaining current measures

Throughout the pandemic, we have followed Government guidance, whilst prioritising the health, safety and happiness of our children, young adults and staff. The most recent Government guidance states: ***'Schools which remain open past 19 July 2021 can maintain current measures until the start of the Advent term'***

I met with the Local Authority and other headteachers this week and it remains the case that Rackham will be maintaining current measures until the end of term. This means, for example, that children will still be taught in designated bubbles, social distancing rules will be maintained, and our staggered start and end timings will remain.

## Arrangements for September

As the guidance currently states, we are hoping our school will return to some form of normality in September. However, in certain circumstances such as a local outbreak, measures may be reintroduced.

You may find when your children return to school in September that some of the changes from this year will remain in place. This is because schools have found that some of the measures have improved the systems used and have proven to be beneficial. Please do remember that all school situations are different and what happens in one school will not necessarily be the same in another school. I work closely with the headteachers in our local schools cluster, the Witchford Area Schools Partnership (WASP) and we are all aware of the fact that schools may choose to differ in their approach according to the needs of their communities.

We will be in touch with you again at the start of the new term with details of changes to routines and procedures, but we would like to garner as much information as possible from our parent community before writing our revised risk assessment and would appreciate your support with this. This [short survey](#) should only take you a few seconds to complete and will help us ensure we are considering the views of all stakeholders in our planning. We hope to be able to confirm arrangements for September drop off and collection times before the end of next week, so please complete this short questionnaire as soon as possible.

## Contact tracing

One of the key changes that will take place from 19<sup>th</sup> July is that education and childcare settings will no longer be asked to conduct routine contact tracing. Information about this was released by the DfE yesterday, but it is rather confusing. The Local Authority are currently working with Public Health England and are finalising a letter for parents detailing the revised contact tracing process for next week. We will send this to you as soon as we receive it.

Please find a letter attached from our Chair of Governors, Simon Karger. Simon has extended his thanks to the community on behalf of the governing board, and offered some clarity on our class mixing process which some of you may find useful. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our governing board for their support and their strategic leadership of the school over the past 18 months which has been exemplary.

Next week, we will be sending out information about our new Rackham After School Club (RASC) which is being led by Miss Housden.

As we approach the end of another academic year that has been significantly challenging for us all, I would again like to extend our sincere thanks to you all for all you have done during the pandemic to support your child. We continue to be grateful for your ongoing resilience, cooperation and understanding and I look forward to writing to you all again before the end of term.

Yours sincerely,



Bridget Harrison  
Headteacher

