



Roehampton Church School

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RE: UK COVID-19 Government guidance update

15th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we are sure you are aware, the UK Government have recently released new guidance around the country's Coronavirus recovery strategy. Central to the Government's plans for recovery is the expansion of the number of pupils returning to primary school settings. The latest guidance for parents can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>. This document will also answer a range of questions you may have regarding potential issues such as siblings, attendance, travel and testing.

Given the current political climate, this advice may well change as new guidance is being issued on a daily basis. I have not communicated with you before now, as I was certain that this would be the case and indeed, it has been. I am sure it will change again as the education unions are meeting the Government today and so the details I am setting out below are very general. I will write again once we know a little more and we have concrete plans, as I don't want to say we will do something only to be told that we cannot and then we have to change everything.

The principles on which we will offer a return for the children are:

- We will start with one class. It is likely this class will be one of the younger classes as the logistics and safety concerns for the children will be more difficult to manage than the older children who will understand the concept of social distancing a lot better.
- We will put in place measures to restrict parents, carers movement when dropping, and collecting their children and stagger the arrival and collections times for the children so as to try and maintain minimal social contact.
- The class of children will be split into two smaller groups. Each group will have the same staff attached to it whenever possible. This may have to change depending on staff availability but we will try to make it as consistent as possible to minimise the risk of any cross-contamination.
- Each group will use the same learning space each day, they will not move around the school. Playtimes will be staggered so that the children do not come into contact with as many children as they normally would. Toilet times will also be scheduled to minimise movement.
- Some of the resources in the classrooms will be removed to ensure cleaning is easier. Some of the soft furnishings will also be removed, again to try and ensure the environment





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is easier to manage. We will be cleaning the equipment the children use every evening and will also be doing some cleaning during the day. We will also try to make sure the children use the same pens and pencils and don't share these with their classmates. It may not be possible for the children to take reading books home.

- We will try our very best to keep the children adequately spaced as per the Government guidelines. This will be difficult with the very small children.
- The children may not be in school for a whole week. They may only come to school for a proportion of the week. More clarity on this as soon as we can.
- We will not be providing hot food. All children will be asked to either bring their own packed lunch or have one provided by the school if they are eligible for free school meals. Children will eat their lunches in their learning space and we will not be using the hall.
- We will try and do some of the time with the children outside providing it is realistic to do so.

The government have made it clear that all this will only happen on the proviso that the five key tests set by government justify the changes at the time, including that the rate of infection is decreasing and the enabling programs set out in the Government Roadmap are operating effectively.

The nature of how school is going to be for the next little while will be very different. Familiar routines and systems may not be there and the children could be taught by members of staff they are not used to.

It is our aim to try and open the school for as many children as we can, in the best way we can, given the restrictions we have with our site and the levels of staffing. The overwhelming factor that will always guide our decision making **is the safety of the children and the staff**. If at any point I feel this is more difficult due to circumstance that have arisen then we may have to stop our offer and change things before we open again. As I stated earlier I feel it is **so** important to not promise something we cannot deliver and I want to be completely honest with you all about this.

Finally could I please ask for some initial information from you. I am assuming that some parents and carers will be choosing not to send their children back to school. It is your choice whether you do or don't at this point in time. The Government isn't putting pressure on Parents and Carers who choose not to. From our point of view the sooner, we have an idea of how many children may come back during the week of 1st June the better and this will aid our planning. CAN I PLEASE ASK YOU TO REPLY TO THIS EMAIL LETTING US KNOW IF YOU INTEND TO SEND YOUR CHILD BACK OR IF YOU INTEND TO KEEP THEM AT HOME AND NOT SEND THEM BACK. Thank you so much.

More next week, in the meantime take care, stay safe.

Best wishes

Richard Woodfin
Headteacher

