



8 July 2020

Dear Parent

HEADMASTER'S INTRODUCTION

Further to the Government's announcement about the expected full opening of schools at the start of September we would like to share with you the pertinent points in some cases, verbatim, from the [Guidance for full opening – schools – published July 2nd 2020](#).

The information in this document, which is a considerably condensed version of the Guidance has been prepared by Mrs Forster. Whilst you may find the length of it off-putting, I hope that you will instead see it as comprehensive clarification of the RGS position.

This document is designed to share public information with you to give you as much clarity as we are able as we move into the summer holiday. Please read it with the understanding that it is quite possible that some things may change over the coming weeks.

I will write a conventional Headmaster's Letter before we break up.

Philip Wayne

GUIDANCE FROM MRS FORSTER

As we all know, returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing. Time out of school is detrimental for their cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. This impact can affect both current levels of learning and their future ability to learn, and therefore we must ensure all pupils can return to school as soon as possible.

As a school, we will deliver two key outcomes.

THE EDUCATION YOUR SONS DESERVE

The key principles, in line with Government guidance, that underpin our approach are:

- education is not optional: all pupils receive a high-quality education that promotes their development and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life;
- the curriculum remains broad and ambitious: all pupils continue to be taught a wide range of subjects, maintaining their choices for further study and employment; and
- remote education, where needed, is high quality and aligns as closely as possible with in-school provision: we will continue to build our capability to educate pupils remotely, where this is needed.

PASTORAL SUPPORT AND CO-CURRICULAR PROVISION

- support the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement;
- address and equip pupils to respond to issues linked to coronavirus (COVID-19); and
- support pupils with approaches to improving their physical and mental wellbeing

We have a new comprehensive plan for how the School will run in September, including a slight staggered start and finish to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave school. These will not reduce the amount of overall teaching time. Boys will be kept in Year Group Bubbles, as much as we are able, and all boys will be expected in School.

The final plan for September will be sent to parents during the week beginning 17 August.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE

1. **To minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school**

Please ensure that your son does not come into the school if he has [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#) (a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)), or has tested positive in the last 7 days.

We will ensure anyone, pupil or staff, who develops those symptoms during the school day is sent home immediately. We will expect them to follow '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)', which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 7 days and should [arrange to have a test](#) to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19).

Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

2. **We will implement change that allows students to clean hands thoroughly more often than usual, especially when coming on site**
3. **We will ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach**

4. **We will introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach**
5. **And we will minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible.** We ask for your support in impressing on your son the responsibility that he bears in maintaining distance from peers and staff, and ensuring that he does not touch staff and his peers where possible.
6. **We ask that our whole community engages with the NHS Test and Trace process, as follows:**
 - [book a test](#) if displaying symptoms. Staff and pupils must not come into the School if they have symptoms, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in School. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit;
 - provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test & Trace; and
 - [self-isolate](#) if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. Tests can be booked online through the NHS [testing and tracing for coronavirus website](#), or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing.

The closest testing site is currently in Slough, but we will share details of any closer sites as they are established. By the autumn term, all schools will be provided with a small number of home testing kits that we can give directly to parents/carers collecting a child who has developed symptoms at School, or staff who have developed symptoms at School, where they think providing one will significantly increase the likelihood of them getting tested. Advice will be provided alongside these kits.

We ask that parents inform us immediately of the results of a test:

- if someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating

If someone tests positive, they should follow the '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)' and must continue to self-isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to School only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The 7-day period starts from the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

7. Distancing - We will manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community

We will take swift action when we become aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). We will take immediate advice from the local health protection team. This team will also contact schools directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended the school – as identified by NHS Test and Trace.

The health protection team will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate.

8. School buses

Pupils on dedicated school services do not mix with the general public on those journeys and tend to be consistent. This means that the advice for passengers on public transport to adopt a social distance of two metres from people outside their household or support bubble, or a 'one metre plus' approach where this is not possible, will not apply from the autumn term on dedicated transport.

We will ask for your support in asking that your son follows the protocol below:

- Uses hand sanitiser upon boarding and disembarking
- Queues and boards/disembarks in an organised manner
- Physically distances himself within the bus wherever possible
- Wears a face covering, where appropriate, for example, if they are likely to come into very close contact with people outside of their group or who they do not normally meet

9. Wider public transport

In many areas, pupils normally make extensive use of the wider public transport system, particularly public buses. The Government expects that public transport capacity will continue to be constrained in the autumn term. Its use by pupils, particularly in peak times, should be kept to an absolute minimum.

We have been asked to encourage parents, staff and pupils to walk or cycle to school if at all possible.

Families using public transport should refer to the [safer travel guidance for passengers](#). As public transport requires the wearing of facemasks, we will have a process for removing face coverings when pupils and staff who use them arrive at School. Students must not touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing them. They must wash their hands immediately on arrival (as is the case for all pupils), dispose of temporary face coverings in a covered bin or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag they can take home with them, and then wash their hands again before heading to their classroom.

10. Attendance

It is parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age. If your son cannot attend School for any reason we ask that you email attendance@rgshw.com and leave details including your son's name, form and the reason for his absence. We ask for this on a daily basis, whilst your son is absent.

11. Pupils who are shielding or self-isolating

The Government now knows much more about coronavirus (COVID-19) and so in future there will be far fewer children and young people advised to shield whenever community transmission rates are high. Therefore, the majority of pupils will be able to return to school. You should note however that:

- a small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19);
- shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also

return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. Read the [current advice on shielding](#):

- if rates of the disease rise in local areas, children (or family members) from that area, and that area only, will be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and therefore they may be temporarily absent; and
- some pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school in September (usually at their next planned clinical appointment). You can find more advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

If parents of pupils with significant risk factors are concerned, we ask that they contact their son's HoY to discuss their concerns; we will do all that we can to provide reassurance of the measures they are putting in place to reduce the risk in school. Please understand that we have been asked to be clear with parents that pupils of compulsory school age must be in school unless a statutory reason applies.

12. Catering

We expect that kitchens will be fully open from the start of the autumn term.

13. Educational visits

The Government continues to advise against domestic (UK) overnight and overseas educational visits at this stage see [coronavirus: travel guidance for educational settings](#). However, we are able, in the autumn term, to resume non-overnight domestic educational visits.

14. Clubs

We are able to continue to run clubs, including Homework Club, as this is a small consistent group, outside the Year Group bubble.

15. School uniform

We will return to our usual uniform policy in the autumn term. Uniform can play a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of a school and setting an appropriate tone.

Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal.

16. Boarding

We expect boarding to be fully operational from September and have plans in place to ensure this is the case. By the start of term we will be compliant with the Boarding Schools Association Covid Charter.

We wish you and your family well over the coming weeks and will be in touch again in mid-August with more detail.

Marieke Forster
8 July 2020