

Rothwell Primary School,
Carlton Lane,
Rothwell
Leeds
LS26 0DJ



Headteacher: Mrs Leila Rothenburg

Tel: 0113 3862570

Email: admin@rothwell-pri.leeds.sch.uk

Website: www.rothwellprimary.co.uk

Working together to



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Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your families are all well and are adjusting to the many changes to our everyday lives.

We are really looking forward to welcoming all of our children back to school. We are really pleased that many of our children did return to school for some time last term, however we also recognise that there are a number of children who will not have been in school for 6 months. I am sure all will have mixed emotions about coming back to school; a combination of excitement to see friends and staff along with possibly an understandable feeling of being nervous. As always, your children's emotional well-being will be our top priority when they return to Rothwell Primary School. On Monday we will be adding a short video to show you the changes to the site. On Monday we will add a short video to our school website, sharing the one way systems in use to enter and exit the school site. Nursery and Reception parents already have this on Tapestry.

As I'm sure you will appreciate, keeping our whole school community safe is of the greatest importance. We have spent a great deal of time and effort completing an updated, detailed risk assessment and considered the implementation control measures to ensure we are doing all we can to reduce the risks posed by COVID-19. With 360 children returning back to school this September, it means changes to many of our usual routines, for us all. This is particularly true regarding the organisation of the school site which has changed greatly in terms of the drop off and collection procedures detailed in the information below. It is crucial that all of these measures are followed by all parents and carers to ensure the safety of the school community, even if this means a longer walk out of school to get home or to your car.

On Wednesday 15th July I sent out a very detailed letter with key information for September. Much of the information sent in the original letter still stands, however there are significant changes to some sections in light of recent government and local authority guidance which we felt would be really useful to share with you. **The updated sections are written in red**, although you may wish to refresh your memory and read through the whole letter.

New Term

We are open for all children in Years 1-6 on Tuesday 8th September.

Children in Nursery and Reception

For children who will be starting in Nursery or Reception class, we are having a staggered start in order to help our children transition and settle happily and successfully. Separate emails with details of start and finish times were sent out on Friday 17th July for children in Nursery and Reception class. Please ensure you have returned your starter pack to school by Monday 7th September, so we are able to add your child's details to the system and ensure all medical needs are met.

What to do if showing symptoms - Although we will implement all measures from our risk assessment in order to minimise the risk, as with all aspects of society, we obviously cannot guarantee that your child will not develop symptoms of Covid-19.

One of the key ways to reduce the potential spread of Coronavirus is to ensure that you are vigilant to the symptoms of the virus. The medical advice is clear: you must self-isolate if you have coronavirus symptoms or live in the same household as somebody who does. The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If you or your child have one or more of these symptoms, you must call 119 to arrange a test and self-isolate immediately. Please see the flow chart at the end of this letter for more guidance.

Other safety measures we will make in school include:

*Classroom layout- tables are in rows which will enable all children to sit at desks facing forward; this will avoid children sitting face-to-face. This will be different in Nursery and Reception where free flow provision is still permitted and there will more flexibility.

* Rigorous hygiene procedures will be followed at all times with regular hand washing and use of hand sanitiser for the children and adults.

*Enhanced cleaning will also continue within bubbles and across school.

*Social distancing will be encouraged where appropriate in bubbles, however, the government recognise that this is not possible for many primary aged children. This is one of the reasons why the children are organised into bubbles to contain and reduce risk.

*Windows will be kept open to aid ventilation – ***please ensure your child brings a jumper/cardigan and coat to school each day***, regardless of the weather.

Not an all or nothing approach

One of the key messages from Dr Matt Baker, during a recent Zoom call with Leeds headteachers, was that it is not an 'all or nothing' approach to the control measures. Doing as many of these things, as often as possible (even if it is not possible all of the time) will still greatly reduce the risks and give greater protection against transmitting the virus:

- Good hygiene and hand washing routines,
- Increased ventilation
- Bubbles of children – where possible
- Social distancing where possible
- Wearing of masks/visors

One Way Systems – In order to reduce the risk of transmission, with such large numbers of children and adults on the school site, we have no alternative but to introduce One Way Systems on entry and exit from the school grounds. These will operate as follows:

- Children in **Reception** will use the Early Years gate to enter and exit the site, following the one-way system. Only Reception children should use this entrance to come onto the school site.
- Children in **Nursery** will use the main gate and turn immediately right, walking past the bike sheds and enter the Nursery playground. They will then exit through the Early Years gate.
- Children in KS1 and KS2 will enter through the main pedestrian gate, walk past the office onto the main playground. ***There will be a one way system in place. You will then follow this system to drop your children at their classroom at their allocated time.*** Exiting the school site will be at the end of the playground (near KS1 classes) which will then mean leaving the site from the back of the school – through the delivery gate.

- d. For those of you who approach school from the Carlton/Robin Hood side, we are going to trial leaving the pedestrian gate **open for entrance only** to the school grounds. You will then join the one way system and leave through the delivery gate. **No exit through this gate please, as it would mean breaking the one way system.**
- e. *Government guidelines recommend walking to school – this is something we fully support and encourage, in order to gain health benefits and reduce congestion and parking problems for local residents.* Where this is not possible, the school drive through will be open. Anyone using the drive through will join the main one way system from the gates near the MUGA or walk across the MUGA . **Please note, you will need to leave the school site via the one way system, which means leaving through the delivery gate and coming back into the main gate to get your car. Anyone who does not adhere to this will not be able to use the drive through for parking.**

Please see the video on our website which shows the changes in terms of one-way systems, entrance and exit points, where children line up for school and other useful aspects.

'Bubbles' – From September, children will largely be organised into 'Class Bubbles'. The key reason for the bubbles is to reduce the risk of transmission, as well as being able to track any interactions between members of different bubbles in case we were to have any child or staff member test positive for COVID-19. Small groups of children may be taken for intervention or group work; again safety measures will be adhered to closely. The guidance allows for children to be additional bubbles to their class bubbles, such as different groups/bubbles for Kidz Club or with child minders. **Children in Upper Key Stage 2 will continue to break out into smaller groups, as we have always done. This has been risk assessed and measures have been put in place in order to ensure control measures implemented will allow for these children to receive the smaller group support they need for Maths and English.**

Attendance – From Tuesday September 8th 2020, all children in years 1-6 will be expected to attend school. All pre-COVID systems and expectations for monitoring and assuring attendance will be reinstated by the government and local authority. It will no longer be the parental decision whether to send your child to school - exceptional medical circumstances, potential localised shielding and 'track and trace' may lead to children and/or staff being absent, but these will need to be managed on a case by case basis.

Children who have been Shielding– If your child was issued with a shielding letter from their doctor, please email the school office if you have not already done so. We will work with yourselves to ensure all measures are in place to best support your child.

Staggered start and end of the school day - to control gatherings and minimise unnecessary contact between adults and families, we are operating staggered start and finish times as per Government and Leeds City Council guidance. With the additional complication of many classes sharing a cloakroom, this adds an even greater need for the staggered start. It is crucial that all parents/carers strictly adhere to the timings indicated, arriving in the allocated time. With the increased number of children and adults on site, we must ensure there are no gatherings.

Parents / carers arriving early to drop off / collect children and waiting outside the gates or on site unnecessarily, defeats the purpose of the measures we have put in place and increases the risk of transmission. Parents should not be on site before their allocated slot. Ideally, children will arrive at various points within their allocated 10 minutes.

ONLY parents with children in more than one class bubble **AND** with different drop-off times are able to wait, providing they adhere to social distancing, the terms of the home-school agreement **and stand right back at the edge of the playground, next to the field.** As adult to adult transmission is a much higher risk, we must minimise the congregation of adults as much as possible. We will continue to ask that **only one adult** enters the school playgrounds to drop the child/ren off at school.

On arrival, pupils will line up on the markers outside their classroom. Parents must not enter this space.

Staggered Start and Finish Times

Class	Drop-off Time	Pick-up Time
Nursery	8.45am – 8.55am	2.50pm – 3.00pm
Reception A	8.45am – 8.55am	2.50pm – 3.00pm
Reception B	9.00am – 9.10am	3.05pm – 3.15pm
Year 1 – Miss Martin	9.00am – 9.10am	3.10pm – 3.20pm
Year 1/2 – Mrs Fowley	8.40am – 8.50am	2.50pm – 3.00pm
Year 2 – Mrs Sparkes	8.50am – 9.00am	3.00pm – 3.10pm
Year 3 – Mrs Baker-Robinson	8.50am – 9.00am	3.00pm – 3.10pm
Year 3/4 – Mrs Miller	8.40am – 8.50am	2.50pm – 3.00pm
Year 4 – Miss Dowd	9.00am – 9.10am	3.10pm – 3.20pm
Year 5 – Miss Oglesby	9.00am – 9.10am	3.10pm – 3.20pm
Year 5/6 – Mrs Taylor	8.50am – 9.00am	3.00pm – 3.10pm
Year 6 – Mr Burmo	8.40am – 8.50am	2.50pm – 3.00pm

It is important to note that the children will still receive the same amount of learning time within the day, we have shortened the lunch session, which is reflected in the timings of the school day.

Siblings

We recognise the challenges faced if you have more than one child in school who may have different start times. Where you have a gap of ten minutes between drop off/collection times for your children, we recommend coming towards the end of the first time slot as this will reduce waiting time. For example, if you are due to drop one child in school at 8:40pm and the other child at 8:50pm, we suggest you arrive just after 8:45am, then can drop your second child off at 8:50am.

If there is a gap of **20 minutes** between the start times of your children and this is going to cause difficulties, please email the school to inform us of your children's names, classes and start times – along with how we can best support you. There are no guarantees, but as always, we will do our best to work together with you to make this work.

My Bus – children who use the school bus will catch their bus to and from school at the usual times. My Bus will also be adding additional safety measures based on the guidance.

Bikes – in order to ensure that children remain with parents/carers, to reduce the potential transmission and to ensure Nursery parents can safely enter school through their designated entrance, **bikes and scooters will unfortunately not be permitted on site at this time.** As mentioned previously, all children should be encouraged to walk to school.

Uniform/PE– All children should return in full school uniform from September. See the school website or previous newsletter for more details on this. The only change from the school uniform is in relation to PE kit. From week 2, children will be allowed to come to school wearing their outdoor PE kit on the days they have PE. Please ensure PE kit follows our policy. This is to reduce to the risk of transmission from children getting changed - often mixing up clothes as well as bringing more clothing and bags into school. In line with guidance, all PE will take place outdoors to reduce the risk of transmission. The allocated PE DAYS for classes will be shared in our newsletter next week, ready to start during the second week. Please note – no other sports clothing/motifs will be permitted, thank you. As last year, children will take part in running a mile several days per week, please ensure there school footwear is suitable for this.

Kidz Club– As mentioned previously, government advice is that schools can resume before and after school care. We will open our breakfast club from Monday 14th September for 2 sessions: 7:30- start of school and end of school until 6pm. You are able to bring or collect your child at any point during these two sessions. We are unable to take any more bookings for the majority of the sessions/days at this time. If you do require a place for your child please contact us via email to be added to the waiting list. The number of places will be reviewed at the end of September. Entrance will be through the usual EYFS gate and exit will be through the delivery gate.

Please note that due to the restrictions required in our risk assessment, there are some changes to the usual way in which this provision operates, including the breakfast provided. Children will either be in a

Reception/KS1 group or a KS2 group. This is in-line with government guidance but does mean these groups are within a second bubble during this time.

PPE – Although this is not mandatory at present for primary schools, we have a responsibility to protect and minimise the risks for children and staff.

Classrooms:

The children will be in their class bubbles. In these bubbles, the set adults are not required to wear any face coverings. The only change to this is if staff are covering classes and crossing bubbles inside - Kidz Club, covering teachers etc.

Communal areas (corridors, staffrooms...)

In these areas, staff will wear clear visors if they are working with children in groups or 1:1. When staff are in these areas and not working with children, they will wear face masks instead as it is difficult to maintain the recommended 2m social distancing due to the layout of the school building. Please note, staff can wear a clear visors or mask at any time they wish.

Children new to Reception and Nursery - There is also a video on your child's Tapestry account which shows your child's entry into school and what the classroom will look like for children in Reception and Nursery. Please watch this with your child to help familiarise them with the set up. We are confident that the arrangements we have put in place will help your child to make a smooth transition into school. Please ensure you have returned the starter packs for Nursery or Reception class by Monday 7th September, by 10am ideally.

Break times and lunch times – we will continue to stagger break times and all class bubbles will be allocated their own Play Zone for these times. The staggered lunch also means that some children are eating at different times to normal. We would encourage children to bring a piece of fruit for break time as we have found children returning to school have been hungrier than usual. This should be kept in your child's coat pocket until break time.

Lunchtime arrangements

As mentioned previously, lunchtime will be staggered. In order for this to work, this time will be reduced to 45 minutes for each class bubble. At lunchtime, we will not be using the hall at present, as the logistics and risk factors may increase greatly by doing so. All children will therefore eat in their classrooms and play in their allocated Play Zone.

In terms of lunches, we are finalising our menu and will send you a copy shortly. This provision is for children who are entitled to a free school meal or those who wish to purchase a meal.

As always, children are able to bring a healthy packed lunch to school. Just a reminder that no nuts or chocolate should be brought into school; this is because we have children with allergies as well as adhering to the Healthy School's Award. Crisps are for Friday only, as per our usual policy. Our packed lunch policy can be found on our website; please check this out if you are unsure of any elements.

All children in Reception Class and KS1 will continue to be provided with a universal free school meal. As always, we would encourage this uptake and will assume children in these year groups will want a school lunch. If you do wish for your child to bring a packed lunch, this is also fine. For Reception Class and KS1, there is no need to inform us of this. Children who we already know are entitled to a free school meal will also continue to be provided with this. If your circumstance have changed and you feel you are **newly** entitled to this, please inform the office via email, as there is a process you will need to follow to qualify for this.

Bags - No bags should be brought onto the school premises. Children will only need a piece of fruit (in their coat pocket) and a named water bottle. As mentioned, they can also bring a packed lunch if you wish for them to do so. Children should not bring mobile phones into school unless an email request has been made to school. For example, if your child will need to bring their phone as they are arriving on the 'My Bus' service, please email us to inform us that you would like your child to bring their mobile

phone into school. An email also needs to be sent to school for any Year 6 children who will be walking home by themselves. Without this, we will not allow them to leave school without being collected.

Google Classroom – Once children are settled into school, KS1 and KS2 we will continue to use Google Classroom if and when needed. We are also looking at ways to use this to set homework; more information to follow on this during the coming weeks. Tapestry will continue to be used as the platform for children in EYFS available for our new starters to Nursery and Reception class for you to add any information and watch the videos.

Medical forms and home school agreements.

For children who are due to join us in Reception or Nursery, please ensure you have returned your admission packs with all of your details. Once again, in order to keep your child safe, this information will be required before your child is able to attend school.

At present, it is not possible for you to complete spare forms, as we have to reduce the number of adults on site due to COVID-19.

For any child who has already attended school during the summer term, we will already have an updated medical form and a home school agreement. You **DO NOT** need to complete another one. We would just ask you to inform us of any changes to your child's medical details or your contact details over the summer.

For any children who have NOT been into school during the last few months, please return them by 11am on Monday 7th September. In order for children to return to school safely, we must have these completed forms. For health and safety reasons, we DO NOT want parents completing these when they drop their child off at school, as this will hold up the staggered starts and increase risks of transmission.

For all children: if there are any changes in terms of contact details or medical information, we will NEED to know BEFORE your child returns to school on September 8th 2020. Please update us of any changes by Monday 7th September.

In September, a return to school for children, young people, parents/carers and school staff will involve a period of transition and change. Transitions for children and young people are part of the process of moving through education and provide opportunities for growth and development. Many may be looking forward to the opportunity to reconnect with friends and establish routines. We hope the way we have managed to invite all children into school will have eased some of this worry.

I recognise there is a lot of information here and numerous changes. We will be around the school site to support you with these new procedures.

Due to the small size of the school office area, this area will remain closed to non-school staff. The main way to contact school is via email or telephone. During term time, the school office will be open for calls and emails from 8:30am until 3:30pm

As we move forward into uncharted waters once again, the importance of working together has never been so important. If you do have any concerns or queries, as always, please communicate these in the respectful manner that this team deserves and we will be more than happy to try to help. One way systems and staggered start times are becoming part of everyday life at present; these can take longer or mean you have to walk further round, but please support our school community in doing your part.

Thank you for your understanding and patience. These changes will take some adjusting to for us all but, as always, remaining positive and working through any challenges together in partnership will be what brings the best for our children, which is absolutely what we all want. You have been incredible and supportive throughout. Your kind words, social media posts, emails, cards and treats have all really helped us to feel appreciated and have kept us going during the challenges we've faced.

Thank you as always to my amazing school team who I know will go over and above to make this next term successful.

Kind regards,

