

Riverside School September Re-opening – Parent Information

Travel

Before your son/daughter returns to school this September, we ask that you review their route and method of travel to school. Local buses are very busy both at the beginning and the end of the school day, and the close proximity of passengers and number of contact surfaces means they are the location where your son/daughter is at highest risk of contracting coronavirus. To protect our students, we suggest that all students walk or cycle to and from school where possible. All areas of the Riverside and Thames View Estates are within 45 minutes walking distance of our school.

Students who are travelling to and from school by bus must be in possession of a valid Oyster Card as well as a suitable face mask. Students who do not have these may be barred from getting on. We also encourage students to carry their own bottle of hand sanitiser to use when getting on and off the bus and after removing their face mask.

We also ask parents to avoid driving to drop off and collect students where possible. The drop off zone on Fielder's Crescent remains out of use due to the temporary widening of the pavement to facilitate distancing for those walking. The road immediately outside the school should also not be used for dropping off as it causes an obstruction to public buses and other vehicles. No cars are able to drive onto the school site with the exception of blue badge holders.

Adults on site

Parents/carers are not permitted on site without first arranging an appointment with a member of staff. We would ask that you first attempt to have any queries or problems solved by email or telephone and only request a meeting if all other options have been exhausted.

Arrival at school

Face masks offer no protection for those walking or cycling to school and should not be worn.

Those wearing face masks on public transport should sanitise their hands, remove the mask and bin or put it in a plastic bag and then in their school bag, and then sanitise their hands again, before entering the school gates. Students are not permitted to wear face masks on the school premises.

School day

All students will be lined up in designated ball courts in the playground by year and form group.

Students will be kept in protected year group bubbles throughout the school day to prevent large scale outbreaks of coronavirus.

Students will be led to their form room by their form tutor where they will sanitise their hands before entering the room and beginning the day as usual.

Students will sanitise their hands upon entry to every classroom and also before break times.

All classrooms have been reconfigured to ensure maximum spacing and all students will face the same way to prevent face-to-face contact.

Teaching staff, who will be teaching across year groups, will maintain distance from students and other staff at all possible times to prevent transmission.

Students will be asked to avoid unnecessary close contact with peers.

Silent transitions will continue to be enforced to prevent students speaking and reduce close contact between students between lessons.

Weekly assemblies will continue to be held, but will be limited to year group assemblies to avoid mixing of bubbles.

The cleaning team will work through the day cleaning often touched surfaces such as door handles as well as classroom desks at break times.

Break times

All students will sanitise their hands before each break

Students will remain in their protective year group bubbles during break times with designated serving times and areas for students in each year group.

Designated duty staff and physical barriers will ensure students do not mix with those from other bubbles.

Student access to the toilet at breaks will be controlled to maintain distancing and prevent mixing.

After school

Student dismissal will be staggered to enable distancing and reduce the demand on local buses.

Students will be encouraged to walk home if they're able.

Year 11 will continue to engage in silent study and intervention groups until 4pm to further reduce the number of students leaving school at 3pm.

Masks

Students are not permitted to wear masks on the school site.

Scientific research has shown that young people are around half as likely to contract the virus as adults and also that distancing and good hygiene are the best measures to prevent transmission. The measures we have implemented such as regular hand sanitising, students facing the same direction in class and walking silently and single-file in our wide corridors between lessons mean that it is not necessary for students to wear masks.

Our decision is guided by the latest government advice which will be kept under constant review and can be found below:

Based on current evidence, Public Health England does not recommend the use of face coverings in [...] schools or colleges[...].

This is because:

- *children, young people and staff are mixing in consistent groups*
- *not using them correctly may accidentally increase the risk of transmitting the virus*
- *there may be negative effects on communications and therefore on your child's education*