



Ryecroft C.E. Middle School

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25th February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday, I am writing to communicate our re-opening plans.

We would like to welcome **all pupils** back to school on Monday 8th March. However, before we can return to our plans detailed below certain safety measures need to be implemented with KS3 before 'normality' can resume. Please read through the information carefully relating to your child's year group and contact the school office if you have any queries.

We will return to the plans that were in place in September with a few changes implemented that are in accordance with our Trust's recommendations and guidance from the Department for Education.

All pupils will have a temperature check on arrival and pupils in Y5, 6 and 7 will be directed to their classroom bubble. This is the classroom that they were in before lockdown. Normal timetables will also resume, if pupils have forgotten or mislaid this information, staff will be on hand to direct and support as necessary. Y8 will have staggered arrival times on the first day.

To minimise the time spent in corridors and prevent mixing with other year groups and bubbles. KS2 pupils will enter the building via separate doors. Y5 will use the main entrance and Y6 will use the door at the far end of the building and use the backstairs to get to the Y6 classrooms. KS3 pupils will be able to enter their bubbles from the external doors to the classrooms again.

As previously requested, pupils will be required to bring their own equipment as they cannot share with others, and only bring in what they need for the day. Uniforms should be worn as usual, unless it's a P.E day, when kits must be worn.

Due to the new and highly transmissible variants of Covid-19, we feel that we need to maintain the separation of bubbles at break and lunchtimes for the foreseeable future. This will be reviewed again at Easter when new guidance from the Government is expected.

You will have seen that the Trust have suggested all KS3 pupils should wear face coverings in corridors, communal areas and classrooms. The Trust has also asked that parents of KS2 pupils consider the provision of masks for their child too. These are new measures that we have not implemented at Ryecroft until now. We will spend some time talking to pupils on Monday morning about the necessary expectations around wearing a face mask and disposing of them sensibly. All staff will now wear masks in lessons too.

KS3 pupils will be tested using a lateral flow device, to help keep everyone safe and swiftly identify any cases of Covid-19 to prevent further infections. Pupils are not permitted to mix with one another until they have a confirmed negative test result or parents have notified the school that they do not consent to testing.

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For these reasons, it has been agreed within the Trust that Middle Schools will invite **Y7** pupils into school on an appointment basis on **Friday 5th March** to be tested prior to the school formally opening, in order to enable a 'normal' start on Monday 8th March. Pupils must go home after their appointment and parents will only be notified of a positive result. **Y8** pupils will be able to attend on Monday 8th March but their start time will be staggered to enable us to test, maintain social distancing regulations and safety measures. Details of appointment times will be issued to the respective groups as soon as information is returned. Further information about the testing along with the consent forms are attached with this letter. I would like to stress that all key worker children have been having these tests since January with no issues whatsoever. The test is completely administered by the child, Staff are on hand to guide and support the process and ensure the sanitation of the testing area is maintained.

We have been advised that pupils need to be tested three times on site after which they will be issued with home testing kits. We will update you with further information about this when it becomes available.

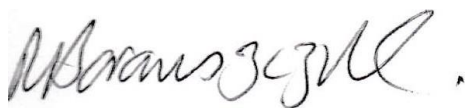
There will be a slight stagger at the end of the day. Pupils will start to pack up at 3:30pm and staff will dismiss and supervise the departure of each bubble, ensuring all pupils have left the premises by 3:40pm.

Pupils have been in mixed groups within the key worker classes since the latest lockdown. We now need to ensure, following the guidance, that pupils are separated into their normal A and B class bubbles for at least 72 hours, to ensure there is no cross contamination. In order to do this, I will need all staff to be in the classrooms. This means that we will not be able to offer any online learning to pupils on Friday 5th March. Instead, we will be setting a World Book Day task for pupils to complete which will be discussed and followed up on with pupils on Monday 8th March. Further details will be issued shortly.

Our plans will be reviewed regularly to ensure that we can keep everyone as safe as possible. We may also have to make changes based on local or national changes, we will always update you of any changes as soon as possible. As mentioned above, we will spend time on Monday morning going through the arrangements with pupils and re-emphasising the importance of social distancing in the classroom and communal areas, both inside and outside the building. We would ask that you support us in this process by discussing the importance of these requirements with your child(ren) prior to their return to school.

Thank you in advance for supporting us with our re-opening plans and for the hard work that has gone in to supporting pupils with their online learning during lockdown. Your efforts and those of the pupils are very much appreciated and will go a long way in helping us to get our pupils back on track as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



Miss R Baramuszcak
Headteacher