

Watergate School
Lushington Road,
Bellingham, SE6 3WG

Interim Headteacher: Fiona Veitch
Deputy Headteacher(s): Clare Chalaye
Natalie Carroll
Linda Matthews (Acting)



Tel: 020 8695 6555
Fax: 020 8695 8280

www.watergate.lewisham.sch.uk

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Dear Parents and Carers

SCHOOL RE-OPENING – GUIDANCE FOR FAMILIES

The government has announced that educational settings can open to all pupils in September, provided that additional safety measures are put in place to minimise the risk of coronavirus transmission.

In line with the government's direction, and following a robust risk assessment process, we are welcoming back all current pupils from Monday 7th September 2020. Families of new pupils will have been contacted and given a start date.

We are so pleased to welcome your children back and thank you all for your support and understanding during this extraordinary time.

We have put together this guidance to provide you with information about the measures that are being put in place to ensure the safest possible environment for our school community. We hope this will address your concerns and reassure you that we have taken the necessary precautions in preparing to welcome all our pupils back to school. You will be aware that government guidance is changing frequently. We will keep you updated by email, through the website and via text message if things change. If you have concerns or questions please contact the school office or send an email to headteacher@watergate.lewisham.sch.uk

In general you will not be able to come onto either school site. If you bring your child to school and collect them at the end of the day please read this part of the guidance very carefully.

If for any reason you do not feel able to send your child back to school at the beginning of term, please contact me straight away, either by email or my work mobile number is 07825111595 – if you send me a text I will call you back.

We look forward to hearing from you, working with you, and seeing you again at some point during this school year.

Fiona Veitch

Headteacher



IN BRIEF - to keep our school safe, we would like you to help us by:

- Keep to pick-up and drop-off procedures, following staff directions – you leave the school site promptly. Maintain social distancing with staff and other adults and adhere to the distancing markings on the ground.
- Only communicate with the school via telephone or email
- Remain vigilant for the symptoms of coronavirus.

Keep your child at home if they develop symptoms or if any members of the household develop symptoms

- Ensure your child washes their hands before they leave for school and after they return home
- Where appropriate: help your child understand the importance of infection control, good hygiene, and social distancing.

All this guidance is current, but things are changing daily. If there is a spike in cases, we may have to go into a local lockdown and different controls may be implemented. We will keep you updated with any changes as soon as possible

RISK ASSESSMENT

The school has undertaken a robust risk assessment to identify all the potential risks and we have implemented control measures in line with the Government Guidance. This risk assessment will shortly be published on the school website.

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME - .

If anyone in your household becomes unwell with:

1. a new and persistent cough
2. a high temperature,
3. And/or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia),

you and your child must not come to the school and must stay at home and follow

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>, which explains the requirement to self-isolate for at least 10 days and how to arrange to have a test to determine whether anyone in your household has coronavirus (COVID-19).

Please notify the school office via telephone immediately if there is ANY possibility that your child, or anyone in your household may have coronavirus. Your child cannot come into school.

Please bear in mind that it is essential to stick to this guidance because we have some very vulnerable children at Watergate and a number of staff who have underlying health conditions that also make them vulnerable.

TESTING

All pupils and members of their household, will be able to have a test if they are displaying symptoms of coronavirus. It is very important that you do this.



There is information about how you can access a test on the NHS website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing> . You can also call NHS 119

If your child is sent home from school with symptoms and then has a test, you must inform the school of the results as soon as possible. If the test is negative, your child can return to school when they feel better. If the test is positive, your household will need to follow guidance and continue the self-isolation period.

Because of the risk to others we urge you to inform the school immediately of test results.

If anyone in your house has a positive test you will need to engage with the NHS Test and Trace programme.

PROCEDURE FOR PUPIL DISPLAYING SYMPTOMS OF COVID 19

It is extremely important that all parents remain vigilant regarding preventing, identifying and minimising the spread of coronavirus.

It is essential that you do not send your child to school if they have any of the following symptoms.

- A high temperature – this means they feel hot to touch on their chest or back
- A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if they usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- A loss of, or change in, their normal sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

It is also essential that you **follow government guidance and keep your child at home if somebody in your household has tested positive for, or has, symptoms of coronavirus.**

If your child becomes unwell at school and shows symptoms of coronavirus, the school will take the following immediate actions:

- Your child will be taken to a designated area in school and you will be informed.
- Your child will be supervised while waiting for collection by one or two members of staff who will wear full PPE
- You must come to collect your child urgently.
- You must access a coronavirus test for your child.
- You are required to engage with the NHS Test and Trace programme.

IF AN INDIVIDUAL IN YOUR CHILD'S CLASS TESTS POSITIVE FOR CORONAVIRUS

The school will send the individual's close contacts home to self-isolate for 14 days. Close contacts include:

- Direct close contacts – anyone who has been in face-to-face contact with the individual for any length of time, within 1 metre – this includes face-to-face conversation, unprotected (skin-to-skin) physical contact or being coughed/sneezed on.



- Proximity contacts – anyone who has been in extended close contact with the individual, within 1 to 2 metres for over 15 minutes.
- Anyone who has travelled in a small vehicle, e.g. a car, with the individual.

We will notify you if this is the case and you will be required to collect your child from school immediately. While pupils are awaiting collection, they will remain in their classroom and be able to access one toilet. If a positive case is identified, all parents will be informed immediately.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP – if you bring your child to school please read this section extremely carefully and adhere to the guidance at all times.

Many schools are not letting any parents into school at the current time. We have made the decision to trial this system as we feel that it will offer the best flow and mean that drop off and collection can be as quick as possible. HOWEVER if families are not able to follow this guidance it will be reviewed, this may lead to longer waits to drop off and collect your child or the introduction of staggered start and finish times.

Whilst we understand that you may be in a rush to get to work or to pick up collect other children please respect our system and treat our staff with patience and politeness.

Only one adult may drop off or collect a pupil.

The adult who is bringing or collecting a child **MUST** wear a face covering when they come into the building.

The adult and child must sanitise their hands on entry to the building

Two families will be admitted to the building at a time – we ask that you maintain a distance from each other.

You will be asked to take your child upstairs to the upper foyer and to sit on one of the two designated areas – do not sit with other parents.

Once two families have gone upstairs a second two will be admitted to wait downstairs in reception – one family seated on either side of the area.

Other families will be asked to wait outside between the designated yellow lines, observing the social distance markers. If you prefer you can wait in your car until there is no queue.

A member of the admin team will alert staff members to collect or bring the child of the family in the upper foyer.

Once you have handed your child over, or collected them, please leave the building **IMMEDIATELY**. The next parent/carer will then be able to go up to drop off or collect their child.

If someone else is using the stairs wait until they have got to the bottom or top – do not use the stairs with others or cross on the stairs.



SOCIAL DISTANCING

To reduce the risk of transmitting coronavirus in our school, social distancing measures will be implemented, wherever possible, although we understand that for the majority of our pupils this is extremely difficult due to the level of care and support they need or because of their ability to understand and respond to these principles..

Staff will work with all pupils to ensure their safety and positively model and reinforce good social distancing behaviour.

We will have in place::

- An additional space allocated to each class to allow pupils and staff to spread out
- Timetabled use of shared spaces
- Furniture in classrooms arranged to maintain space
- Staggered lunch and break times
- Assigned toilets and changing areas to classes
- Signage and floor markings to encourage social distancing
- No indoor gatherings of class groups, i.e. no assemblies

OTHER ARRANGEMENTS

To increase the effectiveness of social distancing with all staff and pupils attending school, we have made the decision to organise the school into three zones. Children from each zone will not mix with those from another zone.

Children will work in their individual classrooms as much as possible and will remain with others from their zone when they are using the outdoor play areas and at lunch.

We will endeavour to ensure that individuals within a zone do not mix with members of another zone. Some staff may have to move between zones to: deliver learning; assist classroom staff; respond to an emergency situation or; to provide cover. However staff will ensure social distancing is maintained and robust hand washing procedures and good hygiene practices are adhered to.

Shared areas such as the swimming pool, PE hall, sensory rooms, some outdoor areas and soft play will be timetabled for use and appropriate cleaning will take place before children from another class use them.

Wherever possible resources will not be shared between classes.. Any resources that must be shared will be cleaned following Government Guidance or left unused for 72 hours.

Pupils will be able to take home limited books and resources from their class to support their learning. When returned they will be taken out of circulation for 72 hours before they can be used by others

Each class will be allocated specific toilets which will be cleaned regularly during the day.



Tissues, hand sanitisers and lidded bins will be available in each class.

Contact points and surfaces will be cleaned and sanitised regularly during the school day – we have engaged an external contractor to do this work.

We request that pupils **do not bring in non-essential items from home**. Only the following items are permitted unless otherwise agreed with the class teacher:

- Packed lunch
- Essential medication and medical equipment, including continence products
- Coats and other essential outdoor wear
- School bag

UNIFORM

We encourage our pupils to wear school uniform. Uniform provides your child with important visual information that it is a school day, so helping them to understand the routine of the week. Please ensure that your child wears clean clothing to school each day.

INFECTION CONTROL

Strict infection control measures are an important aspect of keeping all staff and pupils safe and healthy. This means that we will be encouraging and enabling our pupils to follow good hand and respiratory hygiene throughout the day. Staff will work with all pupils to ensure their safety and to teach good infection control behaviour, such as hand-washing and use of tissues throughout the school day. Pupils will be helped to wash their hands at various times during the day including: on arrival; after removal of their face mask / covering (if worn); before and after snack and play time; between activities; before and after lunch; after using the toilet; after coughing or sneezing.

Pupils will be supported to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water or to use the sanitiser.

We have also enhanced our cleaning regimes to include cleaning / sanitising of classrooms, toilets, surfaces, contact points (door handles, switches, handrails, phones etc).

Staff and visitors will also be required to follow stringent infection control measures.

FIRST AID / INTIMATE CARE

There have been significant changes to our first aid and intimate care procedures to ensure we have stringent hygiene controls in place. Additional personal protective equipment has been issued to staff to use when caring for your child at these times. If you are called to collect your child after an accident you will need to report to reception and remain outside the main entrance until your child is brought to you by a member of the staff team.

VISITORS,

Visitors, including parents (other than when dropping of or picking up), are not permitted to come onto either school site without a prior appointment and then only where it is absolutely necessary. Anyone who



need to meet with a member of staff is required to call the school office to discuss the purpose of their meeting. Meetings will only be held if absolutely necessary, ensuring social distancing and adequate ventilation. We will offer meetings via Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

We recognise the importance of input from NHS therapy teams and medical staff and are currently working to ensure that we have shared protocols so your children do not miss out on essential services.

SCHOOL TRIPS

The government has advised that overnight trips do not go ahead until further notice. We are not planning or arranging any new school trips at this time.

As term progresses we will review educational visits to outdoor spaces, providing no public transport is required. We will inform you if these visits are to start again.

ASSEMBLIES / GATHERINGS / EVENTS

The government has advised that school do not hold full school assemblies at this time. We may hold class assemblies, but no parents / carers will be invited. We will not be organising any events or gatherings for the foreseeable future.

THOSE WHO WERE EXTREMELY CLINICALLY VULNERABLE

If your child is considered extremely clinically vulnerable, clinically vulnerable, was previously 'shielding' or lives with somebody who was shielding; they are now able to return to school. If your child is considered extremely clinically vulnerable, you may wish to contact your their GP to discuss whether additional safety measures need to be implemented to enable them to return to school. If after speaking with their GP, you decide that your child will need additional safety measures in place to attend school, please contact myself via the school office.

FINALLY....

We are very aware of your children's needs and will be focussing upon a recovery curriculum to support pupils to settle back into school after such a long period of disruption. We know that you are very likely to be worried about your child returning to school. Please do contact us to share any information about how they have been, what they have learnt whilst at home, or anything at all. Be assured that staff will have had handovers from your child's previous classes about their likes, dislikes, preferences, equipment, calming/comforting strategies etc. Wherever possible we have tried to ensure that there is at least one person who knows them in their class.

