



20 May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Phased Opening of Schools

We are in very uncertain times at the moment but we are working hard to ensure we keep your children and all the staff within Two Rivers High School as safe as we possibly can.

On 15 May the Government announced that, from the week commencing 1 June, special schools will work towards a phased return of more children and young people without a focus on specific year groups. Please be aware that this doesn't mean that we will be open to take your child on the 1 June, but we will be in touch when our plans are finalised.

Although the emphasis is on increasing the number of pupils in schools, this will be in line with advice from Staffordshire partnership of schools and further guidance that will be released from the DFE next week. As all our pupils have an EHC plan and are in the vulnerable category, we will use risk assessments to prioritize which pupils attend during the first phase, whilst also taking into account children of critical workers.

You may have read that the latest science tells us that children are likely to have less severe symptoms if they catch the Coronavirus. However, we want to be clear that children can catch the virus and they can be carriers of the virus. As you are aware, some of our pupils are young adults, aged 16 -19, and whilst we will take every measure we can to keep your child safe in school, we cannot guarantee they will not be exposed if they attend school.

Below are some points to consider:

- Learning opportunities will be provided for all pupils, either at school or at home.
- In school, each pupil will be allocated their own workspace allowing for 2 metres social distancing.
- Children's learning will be more formal; learning through play will not be possible due to the 2 metres social distancing rule.
- Children will have to be taught in smaller groups. The Government is recommending a ratio of 1:15 for mainstream pupils, however we hope to stay below this ratio. This means your child may be put into a new learning group; they may have a new teacher or teaching assistant and may work in a different classroom.
- Break times and lunch times will not be the same as previously due to social distancing. Children may have to eat their lunch in the classroom.
- We will carry out first aid on your child if they hurt themselves in school, washing our hands before and after to reduce any risk to your child. We have gloves and hand sanitizers in school for first aid duties. (Currently, we are not advised to have any form of PPE equipment in schools by the Government and children are not expected to wear face coverings.)

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- Pupils will not move around the school building; this is to support social distancing.
- Pupils will be reminded to wash their hands regularly.
- Pupils will be reminded not to touch others and maintain distance between themselves and others.
- Each child's personal property (coat, lunchbox, water bottle etc.) will be sent home every day.
- Pupils will come to school in uniform, although we ask you to send them in clean clothes every day.
(We are aware that some pupils may only have one set of school uniform and that it would be difficult to source additional uniform at this time. If this is the case for your child, please contact us as we often have some spare uniforms and if we have some that would fit, we would be happy to send this home)
- Parents will be given a drop off and collection time to reduce the number of adults on site. Only one adult per family will be allowed on site to drop off/collect.

You may feel that your child returning to school for the last half term; having to adapt to a significant change in their routine, with the real possibility of having to learn in a different classroom, etc. will be less beneficial for your child's wellbeing. You may decide that you are able to continue to support your child's learning at home, and in doing so, your child's health and wellbeing is being protected. If this is the case, we will respect and understand your decision not to allow them to return to school. We will continue to support you by sending learning home and please remember, you will not be fined for non-attendance during the current circumstances. We will contact you weekly to check your child is okay and whether you have any concerns.

Please contact the school office, either by phone or email, to let the Headteacher know if you wish to send your child back to school, or if you wish to continue with home education for the time being. Once we know the children who are returning to school, and we have finalised the timetable of attendance, we will send out further details regarding your child's learning groups, drop off times etc. For those pupils who use Local Authority organized transport, more information will be sent to you once the transport risk assessments and plans are finalised.

If your child does attend the school setting, your household will be eligible for testing if your child becomes ill with Coronavirus symptoms. If the test proves to be negative, this will enable children and young people to get back to education, and their parents/carers to get back to work. A positive test will ensure rapid action to protect their classmates and staff in their setting.

Please be aware that for the time being, the school office will be closed to visitors and communication will take place via email and telephone only. School will not be open over half term.

On behalf of the senior management team at Two Rivers High, please accept our reassurance that we will continue to do our utmost to support the safety and education of your child.

Yours sincerely



Gail Brindley
Headteacher

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