



3rd September 2021

Dear Parents,

I hope that you and your families had a safe and enjoyable summer and are looking forward to starting school on Monday! We are very pleased with the progress of our summer renovations and are excited to have all the Bowes children on one site.

Over the Summer, the school has undergone extensive work in preparation for the children's return. Various classrooms have been refurbished as well as the establishment of a new Early Years unit. The contractors who carried out the work in the playground were unable to complete the project. They will be returning during the October half term to install a new climbing frame in one of the playgrounds, accompanied by various colourful playground markings.

We have reviewed the latest government guidance and would like to share some updates with you. These are in line with the wider removal of Covid-19 restrictions across the country.

School Start and Finish

- We will be starting the term with the arrangements set out in my letter dated [21st July 2021](#). This will also be sent via another text and emailed as a reminder. Please take the time to read through it so that we can have a smooth start and end to the day.

Bubble System

- It is no longer recommended that it is necessary to keep children in consistent groups.
- This means that children will be able to mix with each other, e.g. at playtimes and lunchtimes, during breakfast and after school club, interventions, etc.
- Classes/Year groups will be returning to attending assemblies in the hall gradually, rather than all meeting together immediately.

Four Control Measures

We will follow the four control measures below, in line with the current guidance:

- Ensuring good hygiene for everyone:** Hand washing and hand sanitising is still essential to minimise the spread of the virus, so children will be hand washing and sanitising regularly throughout the day. The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach will continue to be very important for good respiratory hygiene.
- Maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes, using standard products such as detergents:** We will continue to maintain an appropriate cleaning schedule. This includes regular cleaning of areas and equipment with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.
- Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated:** We will continue to ensure our school is well ventilated and that a comfortable teaching environment is maintained.
- Following public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of Covid-19:** We will continue to advise that pupils, staff and adults follow the public advice on testing, self-isolating and managing confirmed cases of Covid-19 in line with the guidance.

Face Coverings

- These are no longer required to be worn by staff or parents in the playground during drop off and pick up. However, we will respect anyone's decision to continue to wear one.
- Face coverings are also no longer advised for staff in classrooms or in communal areas.
- The government has removed the requirement to wear face coverings by law, but expects and recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where you may come into contact with people you do not normally meet. Therefore, there will be times that we will recommend that parents wear face coverings if they are invited into the school building, e.g. to watch performances, class assemblies, parent partnership meetings, etc.

If your child develops Covid-19 symptoms or has a positive test result

- Your child **should not** come to school if they have symptoms, have had a positive test result or if they have to quarantine (e.g. have visited a country on the red list).
- If your child develops [Covid-19 symptoms](#), however mild, they will be sent home and you should follow public health advice. You should get a PCR test to check if your child has Covid-19 as soon as possible and your child should stay at home and self-isolate until they have had the test results back.
- If your child tests positive, your child is required to self-isolate in line with the [guidance](#). Please inform the school as soon as possible.
- If your child has a positive LFD test result, they should also self-isolate. Whilst waiting for the PCR result, your child should continue to self-isolate at home and not attend school. Please also inform the school of any positive LFD result.

Self-isolation for children

- From Monday 16th August 2021, unvaccinated young people up to the age of 18 years and 6 months and fully vaccinated adults, are no longer required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with Covid-19, or are a close contact of someone with Covid-19.
- Those identified as a close contact will be informed by NHS Test and Trace that they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. We strongly encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so. There is no requirement to self-isolate while awaiting PCR test results and your child can attend school as usual. If your child has been identified as a close contact, they can continue to attend school as usual.
- The school will no longer identify close contacts; NHS Test and Trace will identify them.

Regular Testing

- It is recommended that households test twice weekly for Covid-19 using rapid lateral flow tests. Around 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 do not have symptoms.
- Rapid lateral flow tests help to find cases in people who may have no symptoms, but are still infectious and can pass the virus to others.
- It is therefore recommended that **children** and staff are **tested before they start school**. Please click [here](#) for more information about ordering rapid lateral flow tests. There is also a rapid testing site in Southgate Library. [Click here](#) for more details.

Positive Cases of Covid-19 in school

- In line with the advice from the Local Authority and Public Health England, we will only be informing parents of positive cases of Covid-19 in the school if the number of cases substantially increases and reaches the thresholds identified in our [Covid-19 outbreak management plan](#).

Covid-19 Risk Assessment

- The whole school [Covid-19 risk assessment has been updated](#). In line with the guidance we have a Covid-19 outbreak management plan to manage local outbreaks of Covid-19. These have both been uploaded to the Bowes website and linked in this letter.
- [Click here](#) to read the guidance from the government on what parents need to know about schools.

Attendance

- As you know attendance is mandatory for all children of compulsory school age. Please make sure your child comes to school regularly. Of course, if your child is unwell, has Covid-19 symptoms or tests positive for Covid-19 please keep them at home. We are still aiming for 96.5% attendance as a school to ensure our children have the best possible chance in education, while still continuing to be safe and cautious due to Covid-19.

School Uniform

- Please ensure that your child is wearing the correct school uniform (including correct footwear) and that all items are labelled.
- PE days will be shared with parents very shortly and on these days the children are required to wear their active uniform to school.
- A full list of our uniform can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff. We look forward to welcoming you all back on Monday.

Best wishes,

Effie Demetriou
Headteacher