



Wednesday 27th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you are aware, the government have set out their intention for schools to open to more pupils from 1st June, subject to scientific advice and the five key tests being met. I am now writing to you to give you more details about the arrangements we have made, but before I do, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your understanding and cooperation since we had to close to the majority of children in March. I know that this period has been challenging for many families.

Since the announcement, staff and governors have been working hard to take the necessary steps to be ready to welcome more children back to The Ridge. I have already written to you to outline our approach - initially increasing childcare capacity for the children of critical workers and vulnerable children and preparing to welcome back pupils in Year 6.

School will be closed for all children, including childcare, on Monday 1st June to allow for staff training. Childcare will reopen on Tuesday 2nd June from 8.00am and we anticipate opening for Year 6 from Thursday 4th June. Further information about the specific arrangements for those children in Year 6 who are returning to school, will follow.

Whilst for the vast majority of children and young people, coronavirus is a mild illness, some categories of children with specific serious health conditions should not attend school. If you are unsure whether your child should attend due to a health condition that they or someone they live with has, please contact us so we can discuss the details with you.

First and foremost, it goes without saying, that the safety of your child and of our staff is our top priority. We are working hard, following the latest government guidance, to develop and implement a number of new ways of operating. This will allow us to open as safely as possible, focusing on 'protective measures' that will help limit the risk of coronavirus transmitting within our setting.

Our risk assessment will be available on the school website for parents and carers to view. Some of the steps we are taking in readiness for reopening include:

- Asking that anyone who is displaying coronavirus symptoms, or who lives with someone who does, not to attend school. That includes children and staff who work here.
- Practicing Social Distancing as much as we can. Whilst we are unable to guarantee that people will always maintain the 2m distance, we have arranged our classrooms with tables 2m apart. We will be keeping our children in small groups (or 'bubbles') of between 4 and 6 with as much consistency of staffing as possible and minimising contact with other groups around school.
- Social distancing markers around the school site and operating a one-way system at certain points during the school day.



- Cleaning hands more often than usual. We have developed routines to ensure children understand when and how to wash their hands, making sure they wash them thoroughly for at least 20 seconds using running water and soap and drying them thoroughly, or using alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
- Ensuring children understand good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach and ensuring a good supply of tissues and lidded bins.
- Implementing an enhanced cleaning schedule, ensuring surfaces touched by children and staff are cleaned regularly and throughout the day, including table tops, door handles and play equipment.
- Asking parents and carers to physically distance from each other and from staff when dropping off and collecting their children, to avoid chatting to other parents and carers around the school site and limit drop off and collection to one parent or carer per household.
- Asking children not to bring items from home other than a limited list including their lunchbox and water bottle. We would recommend that wherever possible children leave their coat at home.
- Asking parents and carers to complete an online form to acknowledge their understanding of the expectations and risk controls in place to keep children and staff safe. Without this, children will not be able to return to school. (Further details to follow)

The school experience for the children attending will be very different to how it was during the first two terms of the academic year. Bubble sizes will be small and we will be encouraging social distancing at breaktimes and lunchtime. The curriculum will not be the same as it would have been during a normal summer term and sadly, many of the events we traditionally hold during the final term of Year 6 will be unable to happen or may be very different. Some children will continue learning at home and wherever possible the home learning on the school website will be similar to that which is being delivered in the classrooms.

What can parents and carers do to help?

- 1. If your child, or someone in the household has coronavirus symptoms, they must not come to school.**
2. If your child develops coronavirus like symptoms at school, they will need to be immediately collected. Please make sure that you (or someone nominated to care for your child) are contactable at all times during the day whilst your child is at school. We will isolate the child from the rest of their bubble until you arrive in order to reduce their contact with others.
3. Please provide reassurance to your child that we will be looking to establish new routines and that they will soon become used to this. Although your child may not have his / her normal teacher and may be in a different room to their usual classroom, they will be with an adult who they are familiar with.

The government have confirmed that all children who are attending school will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus and you are encouraged to get your child tested in this

Gregory Road, Wollaston, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 3NF

T: 01384 818 800 F: 01384 818 801 E: info@ridge.dudley.sch.uk

www.ridge.dudley.sch.uk



scenario. The aim is to enable children to get back to school, and their parents or carers not to need to self-isolate any longer than is necessary, if the test proves to be negative. A positive test will ensure rapid action to protect other children and staff in their setting. We ask all parents and carers to ensure they organise a test for their child, in the event that they develop coronavirus symptoms, and notify us immediately of a positive test. Further guidance is available about [getting tested](#).

We are looking forward to welcoming your children back and I hope that you are assured that we have taken all possible steps to ensure safety for all in our setting. Further details will follow but in the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or suggestions.

Kind regards

Mrs D A Hudson
Headteacher