



Rotherhithe Primary
Rotherhithe New Road
London
SE16 2PL
Tel: 0207 2371586
office@rotherhithe.southwark.sch.uk



5th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year to all our children and families. We hope you had a restful and enjoyable festive break. We are writing to update you on the most recent government guidance for schools, which was published on the 2nd January 2022 and then updated again on the 4th of January.

We have used the government guidance and updated our risk assessments and arrangements for our own schools. You can find our updated Risk Assessment on the school's website which you can find [here](#).

Changes to school guidance in January 2022

From September 2021, schools were advised to discontinue the use of bubbles and the mixing of children was allowed, but we limited mixing at RPS. However, due to the rising cases of COVID across the country, we are reducing this further and children will remain within year groups as much as possible.

Please be aware that class bubbles, remote learning and social distancing may have to come into effect again **if** there are staff shortages, localised outbreaks and/or it is recommended by the local authority.

Testing for staff and pupil

Prior to returning to school, we requested that all staff do a Lateral Flow Test (LFT). Currently, staff do LFT twice weekly and this will continue. We strongly recommend that parents and children do regular lateral flow tests over the next few weeks to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

Isolation for positive case

Since Wednesday 22nd December, the **10-day** self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 can be reduced to **7 days** in some circumstances.

Individuals may now take Lateral Flow Test tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two consecutive negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than **day 6** of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken **24 hours apart**. This also applies to children under 5 (Lateral Flow Test testing at parental or guardian discretion.)

If both these test results are negative, and your child **does not have a high temperature**, your child may end self-isolation after the second **consecutive** negative test result and return to school from day 7 (updated guidance on 4th January 2022.)

Daily testing for close contacts of Covid -19

Government advice to schools says that adults in school who are fully vaccinated, or children over the age of 5, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take a Lateral Flow Test every day for seven days and can continue to attend school as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

Adults who are unvaccinated, or who have not had both doses of the vaccine must self-isolate.

The government advice is that children under 5 do not take part in daily testing if they are a contact of a confirmed case and can continue to attend school so long as they remain well. However, they should limit their contact with anyone who is at a higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19, and arrange to take a PCR test as soon as possible.

Remote Education

We will do all we can to prioritise children being in school and our staff are taking all the measures they can to ensure they remain healthy and well. However, you may be aware that we had high numbers of absences amongst the staff due to isolation or positive Covid cases. It has been challenging to find supply cover teachers, especially on short notice, and this is because most schools were also facing the same high level of absences due to isolation and or positive Covid cases.

We will continue to do all we can to redeploy staff to ensure that children remain in school. However, we may not be in a position to cover multiple members of staff at the same time and we may have no other choice but to temporally move to remote learning for some classes. This will be as a last resort if we are unable to cover staff absences and ensure children's safety in school. We understand that this may inconvenience parents and we will only do this if the school has no other option.

Wearing masks

Staff and visitors who are not exempt are requested to wear face coverings in the school building within corridors and in communal meetings and in areas that they do not routinely work. Children may choose to wear face coverings in school. PPE will be used when a member of staff is in contact with a person with symptoms of COVID-19 and when performing intimate care tasks for children.

Ventilation and promoting clean air

We will continue to keep windows open when they are in use to ensure that there is ventilation. Each class has also been given an air monitor to ensure that we stay within good levels of ventilation.

Other information

- All children must bring in their own water bottle, clearly labelled with their name. The water fountains will continue to be used to refill water bottles.

- Any lunch bags or boxes must be washed thoroughly at home each day.
- Lunchtimes will continue to be staggered to reduce the number of children eating at the same time.
- We will maintain our rigorous cleaning schedule and we will continue to have a cleaner on site during the school day. They will ensure that toilets and high contact areas such as door handles and light switches are cleaned regularly during the day.
- Each classroom will be cleaned thoroughly every evening and communal areas after every use.
- We shall isolate a child if they present with Covid symptoms. Children will be supervised until they are collected. Families will be asked to get a PCR test for their child and to self-isolate until they get the results. We ask families to inform us of the outcome of the test as soon as possible.
- If a child tests positive but is well enough to complete home learning please let the school know this and we will organise remote learning.
- Meetings will continue to be conducted via Zoom or Teams for efficiency purposes. Any meetings that need to be face to face can be arranged if needed. Visitors to the school will continue to be kept to a minimum.
- Whole school assemblies and events will continue to take place virtually and or with their own risk assessment in place. Large gatherings of children will be kept to minimum when indoors. Specialist teachers and therapists will attend school as usual.
- School trips will continue and families will be notified prior to the event and a full risk assessment will be undertaken by the class teacher and approved by senior leadership.

If you have any further questions please contact the school office.

Yours sincerely,

Galiema Amien-Cloete
Executive Head Teacher

Lisa Christiansen
Head of School