

Friday 28 August

Dear Parents

We are looking forward to welcoming everyone back next week. Whilst naturally the school experience will be slightly different from our pre-COVID days, we are thankful that we will be returning to our full curriculum in a COVID secure environment. Our staff team are excited that the updated risk assessment enables us to get back to the basics of having happy children, safely in school, learning and growing up with their friends.

We are fortunate that we have small class sizes, with our largest class being 18 children and with a maximum of two classes per year. Our whole school is smaller than many Primary School year groups, which alongside our spacious grounds gives us reassurance.

Parents are encouraged to visit [gov.uk/backtoschool](https://www.gov.uk/backtoschool) for information and practical guidance. The Government has stated that "There is reasonable, but not yet conclusive, evidence that primary school age children have a significantly lower rate of infection than adults (they are less likely to catch it). Control measures such as hand and surface hygiene, cohorting to reduce number of daily contacts, and directional controls to reduce face-to-face contact remain key elements of maintaining COVID-19 secure school environments and minimising risk."

At SLC we are adhering to the full guidelines which include:

- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- grouping children together
- minimising contact between groups
- arranging classrooms with forward facing desks
- staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible (where age appropriate)

To follow is our comprehensive summary of our latest Risk Assessment (RA) for the start of term. The RA is overseen by our school Governing Body and is reviewed informally on a daily basis and formally each week. Reverend Stephen Rae has been nominated as the Governor with focussed responsibility for COVID Risk Assessment planning, implementation and review.

We will continue to be entirely transparent in our information sharing with you and will immediately inform you via phone, email or text if we have any concerns regarding COVID symptoms or cases. We are sure that you will be equally transparent with us.

Some measures have changed since last summer so apologies for the length of the document, please do review.

### **Action in case of a positive test**

If a member of our Junior School community has a positive test result they must advise school and remain in isolation. If the test was taken because of symptoms, self-isolation must continue for at least 10 days from when the test was taken. If a test has been taken but no symptoms present, self-isolation must continue for 14 days from when the test took place. Following a positive results the school will contact Public Health England who will work with the school to identify close contacts, i.e. those in the bubble and identify further action needed, which may, in some cases, result in a bubble being closed and the children working from home on Google Classroom for a short period.

### **Online Pupil declaration Form**

Just as we did last term, parents are asked to undertake a regular declaration of their child's health and, of course, asked not to bring any child into school who is isolating or displaying symptoms such as a temperature or new persistent cough. In the event a child becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or high temperature at school, we will follow the PHE advice and parents will be phoned and asked to collect them immediately. For our boarding children, they will be taken across to the self-isolation medical area and again parents or guardians contacted immediately. (Boarders who have travelled from overseas to join us have all undertaken a quarantine and will be regularly temperature checked by the House parents.) Please click here to complete the health declaration form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfETYNsuBv3sU5uCsmpioT-11KxLgeAgwozkhGojllXcGRXlw/viewform>

### **Year Group Bubbles**

The school is operating a system of Year group bubbles, there are therefore 8 bubbles. We will have consistent groups which reduces the risk of transmission. The Government states "given the decrease in the prevalence of COVID-19 and the resumption of the full range of curriculum subjects schools may need to change the emphasis on bubbles within their system of controls...schools may keep children in their class groups for the majority of the class time, but also allow mixing into wider groups for specialist teaching, wraparound care and transport, or for boarding pupils....endeavouring to keep these groups at least partially separate and minimising contacts between children will still offer public health benefits."

With this in mind, the RA will maintain Year group bubbles except in particular circumstances where there will, for a short period of time be blended bubbles, by this we mean, where possible, consistent pairing of two Year groups. The risks will be mitigated by the full set of controls and bubbles will only be blended with one other group, namely Years

5 & 6, Years 3 & 4, Years 1 & 2 and 'Reception & Nursery'. The times where two Year groups will blend will be for early morning arrivals, after school clubs and prep, Saturday clubs, boarding children, minibus, sports and forest school. There will also be wraparound care times where different age children will be blended, with strict handwashing and social distancing where possible in place.

The Government acknowledge it is difficult to conduct safe social distancing for primary school age children.

### **Parents and visitors**

Parents are asked to maintain social distancing regulations at all times outside. Parents may only enter the building after 4.15pm having previously made an appointment. Members of staff will also be outside in the mornings and afternoons. Counter to our usual friendly end of the day, the children are not allowed to play outside at school, families are asked to collect their child and depart promptly. There are visual spots painted on the ground outside to aid social distancing on the school run.

### **Medical Centre**

Our Medical Centre will be in operation as usual for non-COVID ailments. Children with COVID symptoms will go to an allocated area where staff will take care of them wearing PPE. Parents are reminded that the Medical Centre need to know of any medication or health requirements at the start of term, please bring in up to date medication and update our records if required.

### **Pre-Prep Pupils (Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2)**

Please use the second gateway onto the Pre-Prep playground (which has a new number lock with the standard 9317Y code) for entrance only and exit via the usual gate with the same code.

Pre-Prep parent arrival times continue to be naturally staggered between 8.00am and 8.30am. Children who arrive early may join our Early Birds club in the Reception classroom, there is no extra charge for this service. Members of staff will be near entrance points to welcome children into school and sanitize their hands. Unfortunately parents and visitors are not allowed inside in the mornings and only with an appointment after school. At the end of the day, the one way system will continue to be in operation and parents may collect from 3.30pm for regular collection and through to 5.00pm for after school club, again at no further cost.

After school activities will resume – more details to follow.

If you have another child to collect from Prep, please either wait in your car or collect all your children after 4.00pm.

### **Personal Equipment for Pre-Prep (Nursery to Year 2)**

Children in Pre-Prep should **not** bring in their own stationery as they will be provided personal pots. Reading books are a necessary educational feature and will be allocated as usual, when they return to school they will be quarantined and wiped over.

### **Prep Pupils (Years 3 to 6)**

Pupils may enter the school via the regular doorways, arrival times will be naturally staggered between 8.00am and 8.20am. Departure times are further naturally staggered by family decisions as to whether to collect at 4.00pm, 4.30pm or 5.00pm and children will use separate exits to minimise congestion at busier times.

### **Personal Equipment for Prep - Years 3 to 6**

Children from Year 4 are encouraged to bring in their own stationery sets in a named pencil case (Year 3 will be provided named school stationery). The school will also provide equipment for individual children, but bringing their own in to school is the best way of avoiding sharing. Teachers are now allowed to mark books but the movement of paper between home and school will be reduced, children will be given more oral feedback during lessons on their work.

We would like all Prep children to arrive each day with a book to read, this will be essential as there will be short moments when our staff will need to sanitize the key touch points in the classroom.

### **Playtimes**

Children will have the freedom to play outside as usual. Older children will be reminded to only play with their Year group bubble, however this is not possible for very young children or young children who wish to play with their siblings. If there is wet weather play children will go to their blended bubble groupings indoors. All children will wash or sanitize their hands before and after playtime. The play equipment will be regularly washed and sanitized.

### **Cleaning**

A thorough cleaning programme is actioned across the school each night and regular surface cleaning of common touch points occurs throughout the day, with cleaning stations in each classroom. Unnecessary fabrics, rugs, soft toys etc. have been cleared away or covered. We have a rapid response cleaning team to ensure standards are maintained throughout the day in high traffic areas and facilities.

### **Hygiene**

We adhere to a strict regime of hand washing and hand sanitizer usage at school. Over the summer we have invested in new outdoor hand washing basins, by the Roberts Hall and on the Pre-Prep playground. Staff will ensure the children's hands are washed or sanitised throughout the day but you are also very welcome to instruct your children on the school run to wash their hands in these outdoor basins. The more regularly we all wash our hands the safer we are.

Children are regularly taught the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' slogan. There are posters across the site reminding staff and children of the importance of handwashing and hygiene.

### **Packed lunches**

We have taken the decision to ask parents to continue to provide packed lunches and a drink for their children. (Our boarding children will be provided individual packed lunches.) We are a nut free school and children may not share their food with another child, as many children have allergies. Please avoid giving your child unhealthy snacks or fizzy drinks whilst in school. The school will continue to provide fruit and biscuit snacks in the mornings and afternoons.

The reason behind this catering decision, which will be reviewed on a week by week basis, is so that we can ensure Junior School children do not go onto the Senior School site, or have buffet catering to reduce the risks of transmission. Our aim is to keep the school open and safe. We all know that children do get hungry rather quickly so please do pack plenty of food!

The school will be offsetting the cost of lunches for parents, the rebate will be £1.20 per day, which will be calculated and issued as a rebate on the Lent term bill.

Our Boarding children will be allocated their own zone in the dining room for breakfast and dinner, scheduled at different times from the Senior School pupils.

Please ensure your child also has a filled water bottle each day.

### **Timetable in school**

We are now able to return to a full curriculum with, for example, important subjects including Music, French, Swimming, LAMDA, music tuition and DT all back on the timetable. The School Swimming pool is due to reopen on 21 September 2020 as it is currently undergoing a refurbishment. The chlorine in the water keeps the activity COVID secure.

After school clubs will be running and more details will follow.

### **School Sports restrictions**

Children will be allowed to play sports in their bubbles. We will not be having fixtures against other schools for the first few weeks and possibly not for the first half of term.

For Prep age children football, cricket and hockey will be the main sports this term. Rugby is usually not played until November and so we will review that nearer the date.

### **Saturday activities for Years 3 to 6**

Prep children will be invited to select any two activities if they are attending on Saturdays. There will be two blended year group bubble activities with more time for hand washing and cleaning of key touch points between activities. Parents may drop off their child at 9.00am and collect at 12 noon. More details to follow.

### **School Buses**

The school minibuses will be in operation once again, please contact the school office for further details.

### **Uniform**

The Government has stipulated that schools should return in their full uniform. Generally, we will return in our summer uniform and anticipate changing to winter uniform in October. We will be flexible on this for families and new starters generally start in winter uniform. We will give you a week's notice of this change over. However, we appreciate that for some families there is a need to wash school clothes daily and so we will review this over the coming weeks, before the change to winter clothing.

The online school uniform shop is open and can be contacted at [schoolshop@slcuk.com](mailto:schoolshop@slcuk.com) please bear with us as it is more challenging providing uniform via the online process. If you are waiting for an order to be processed our staff team will be understanding in this matter.

### **Google Classroom**

We will continue to use Google Classroom for assemblies which will be broadcast into classrooms and for other forms of teaching and learning. We will be ensuring all children have logins for their new Year group at the start of term. Parents are encouraged to keep a record of this information as, looking ahead, we anticipate that many meetings that would usually have happened in person will now need to be online. For example the 'Meet the Teacher' event in September is likely to move online – more details to follow.

Having Google Classroom active gives us two great advantages; of course it improves computing literacy of the children and secondly it gives us a secure way to provide continuity of education should we face a local lockdown or upon advice to self-isolate a Year Group from Public Health England.

### **Face coverings**

Based on current evidence, Public Health England does not recommend the use of face coverings in nurseries or primary schools. The guidance on face coverings will be kept under review, but face coverings are optional for Junior School staff and pupils. If you select for your child to wear a face covering please ensure they have a bag or safe space to put the item safely away whilst eating, playing and sports. It will be parental responsibility to teach the child how to remove and store the item safely. Our teaching team will not insist a child, who removes their face covering, puts it back on, therefore we advise against such coverings for younger children.

### **Staff Training**

There are ongoing staff meetings, training and reviews regarding COVID. Staff are aware that staff-to-staff transmission is a key concern and social distancing is vital between adults. College wide staff, who are not primarily based in the Junior School, will wear face coverings when in communal areas.

### **Trips, Meetings and Events**

At this time we are not going to be scheduling any face to face parent teacher consultation evenings (these can occur virtually), concerts, shows, assemblies or other indoor gatherings. We will allow outdoor trips for Year group bubbles and for the boarders at weekends. All events and trips will need to be thoroughly risk assessed and will only occur outside with extensive control measures in place. The normal annual contribution for trips for children in Reception to Year 6 has not been put on this term's bill and this cost will be reassessed later in the school year with any unspent money refunded.

It is with regret that we have had to cancel both our forthcoming tea parties, but the Teaching team will be in touch with friendly messages sent to you via email to share with your child/children.

### **Parental Volunteers**

We love having volunteers and we are now able to welcome volunteers back into school. We are even keen to have more volunteers to help with hearing the children read, helping them learn to swim, supporting with forest school, helping to run clubs and so on. Volunteers will be trained in both safeguarding and being COVID secure. Please contact the school office for further details, a full DBS will be undertaken for any new volunteers.

### **Safeguarding and Attendance**

The Government have now stated it is compulsory for all children to attend school. That said, we would ask parents to err on the side of caution should your child appear unwell, perhaps giving them 24 hours to see how symptoms develop. To help take care of each other, we all need to follow the Government guidelines to 'stay alert' in this respect. Please contact us by 9.30am if your child is unwell and unable to attend stating their symptoms. For COVID related symptoms please take your child to the Manston Airport testing area. Anyone with Coronavirus symptoms, however mild, can get a free swab test that takes less than a minute. Tests should be booked or ordered as soon as symptoms begin at [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) or by calling 119. Our school Medical centre will house supplies of tests should we require any for our boarding children.

### **Pastoral Support for children**

The School is well resourced to offer support where needed. Firstly, the form teachers will quickly build a strong relationship with their new class. Secondly, our SENDCo Mrs Danes can support children across the school with wellbeing issues. Mrs Danes is supported by Mrs Bonell who will be our new Pre-Prep SENDCo, alongside Mrs Scopes who has recently undertaken further training to support children's wellbeing at this unusual time. Our medical team and school counsellors are also available to children.

Betsy our School Dog will also be here to keep everyone cheerful, children will be asked to sanitize their hands before and after petting her. Please email the school office if you are not comfortable with your child being near our school dog (who is always on a lead with an adult present).

Thank you for taking the time to read all of this information. My apologies for it being so long, but I wanted to share the full details with you. As always we are open to discussion and review of these matters.

We are very lucky to have your children at our school. Children are naturally adept at seeking happiness. This Risk Assessment will keep them safe whilst also giving them happy school days. Please don't forget to complete the online Pupil Health Declaration before 4 September: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfETYNSuBv3sU5uCsmpt-11KxLgeAqwozkhGjllXcGRXlw/viewform>

Finally, a special welcome to all our new families – thank you for joining our community.

Kind regards

**Mrs Rowe**  
**Head of the Junior School**  
**St Lawrence College**