



The Ryde School

Pleasant Rise, Hatfield, Herts, AL9 5DR

01707 267333 | www.ryde.herts.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Sue Thompson

Friday 17th July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you and your families are keeping safe and well.

We have been working hard planning for when the children return to school in September.

Our first priority in this planning is the well-being and mental health of the children. After carrying out significant research into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be focussing on ensuring the children feel safe, secure and happy in the first two weeks. You will see from our plan the activities we will be carrying out during this time.

Of course the academic impact on the children has also been huge. We will be working in the initial weeks to ascertain where each is in their learning and the needs they may have. We have very good strategies in place to support children's learning. You will also find the details of these strategies in the plan too.

Our approach will be slow and steady, encouraging and re-engaging with children, building their confidence and learning behaviours so that hopefully by the third week back we can begin to teach a full curriculum. Our curriculum will be creative in its design and delivery, ensuring children experience a broad and balanced curriculum, where learning outside the classroom features with regularity.

I am grateful to the parents that attended yesterday to read and discuss the plan. Their response was very positive and it was accepted unanimously. It has not been necessary to amend the plan following this meeting. However, some questions and suggestions were raised that helped to either clarify or support the plan. Some of these were:

- As traditional assemblies cannot be held could one class attend in the hall and the other classes join in remotely, so that all the children could participate at the same time?
Mrs Thompson replied this was a great suggestion and one that could easily be organised.
- Could there be regular and clear communication in the first few weeks so that parents felt secure that their children were safe and happy in school.
Mrs Thompson replied that it would be possible for photos and videos to be sent to parents and a way of doing this would be discussed with the staff.
- What is the contingency plan if there is a peak in infections or an infection in the school?
Mrs Thompson replied that the government advice was to contact Public Health England and follow their advice.



- Will the Breakfast Club and After School Club be running?
Mrs Thompson replied that the advice about running these was contradictory and needed clarification. It is the school's intention to open the clubs in some way. A parent audit would be carried out in the first weeks of the new term to find out uptake. It is aimed to open the clubs from the third full week back at school.
- Would it be possible for the parents' questionnaire, mentioned in the plan, to be sent out soon so that teachers would be aware of the information?
Mrs Thompson replied that it was planned to send out the questionnaire in the last week of August so that the school would have the most up to date information to work with.
- Would we be talking to the children about COVID-19 when we came back?
Mrs Thompson replied that our PHSE programme had a specific Recovery Package, which addresses issues like COVID-19, bereavement and reconnecting with friends at school. All classes will be following these lessons in the first two weeks.
- Will you have many children who will not come back?
Mrs Thompson replied that when she and Ms Curtis had been speaking to families, the vast majority said their children were keen to return to school. Mrs Thompson said she was keen for all children to attend school from the first day of term. She also said that the first two days and two weeks were very important for the children to attend as it would be in this time that essential well-being and mental health activities would be happening, as well as academic assessments, and any child missing these would be further disadvantaged, making it much harder for them to reintegrate into school at a later time.
- Would we be setting more homework to help children catch up?
Mrs Thompson replied that we would be following our homework policy and encouraging children to read at home and for families to follow some of the strategies and ideas in the homework policy. Also a parents' evening has been arranged for the fourth week back at school so that parents can be informed about how their children have settled back into school and what their learning needs are.
- Could there be two parent representatives for each class to help with communication?
Mrs Thompson replied that she would welcome this and would like to reform the Parent Council, and this would be a great way to do this.
- With scientists and science playing such a big role in COVID-19, would the children's awareness of the impact of science on daily life be referred to?
Mrs Thompson replied that there would be the opportunity to discuss the effects COVID-19 had on society.

There are still other aspects of planning for September to complete, and I will be contacting you through the summer to keep you updated.

These will include:

- Risk assessment
- COVID-19 Health and Safety Policy
- Information about staggered beginnings and ends to the day
- Protocols for entering and leaving the school site



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Of course there may well be other government advice issued during the summer holidays, that we will have to comply with, and so some of the information we share with you may change. We will keep you updated of any changes we have to make.

Yours sincerely

Sue Thompson

