



04.09.2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am writing, for what I hope will be the final time, prior to the full re-opening of Gateways School from Monday 7th September.

I have written several times during the course of the summer and each previous letter contains important information which will not be repeated here. You can find these letters [here](#) and I would urge you to re-read them and make sure that both you and your child/ren are familiar with their contents.

In this letter I will cover a few final points, issue a few reminders and attach two documents for your information.

Documentation

Beginning with the aforementioned documents, they are attached to this communication. The first of these is the updated Risk Assessment which has now received Board of Governor approval and confirmation from our insurers that it is a sound and insurable basis upon which to re-open the school.

The second document is our Re-Opening Policy which covers the day to day detail not covered by a Risk Assessment.

This is the only time that you will be sent these documents as they will probably be out of date fairly quickly given that the guidance continues to change frequently. Rather than to have out of date copies of these documents in circulation, from this point onwards, I would ask you to refer to our website, [here](#), for the most up to date version of the Risk Assessment and to the Parent Portal, [here](#), for the most up to date version of the Re-Opening Policy. You will be advised when any changes have been made to either of these documents and when you view them, the changes from the last version will be indicated by text highlighted in yellow, **thus**. It will be your responsibility to ensure that you are aware of the contents of both of these documents and that you keep yourself up to date with any changes made to either of them.

Final points

Mobile phones

Prep

Pupils in Prep are not permitted to bring a mobile phone to school without prior permission from Mrs Wallis which will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Upper 3 – Upper 4

The usual process of collecting these in at the beginning of every school day will continue. However pupils will be required to supply their own ziplock / re-sealable bag into which they will deposit their phone during morning Form Time. These bags will then be placed into the Form Box as usual and the box will be taken to the Admin Office. Once there, the contents will be sprayed with an antibacterial / antiviral disinfectant spray and the box sealed until the end of the school day. No access will be provided to this box during the course of the school day. Should a pupil need to leave the school site early and therefore have to collect their phone before the end of the school



day, they will be permitted access to the box to remove their bag containing their phone. The remaining contents of the box will be sprayed once again and the box resealed.

We would strongly suggest that mobile phones are not brought to school by pupils in these year groups. If possible they should be left in parental cars before coming into school or, even better, left at home entirely. Where a pupil is using public transport or the school bus service we would continue to suggest that they bring their phone to school in case they need to make contact with anyone during the journey to and from the school site.

Lower 5 – U6th

The pupils are allowed to bring mobile phones into school but they must be used in accordance with school rules and must not disrupt the learning experience for any pupil.

Use of laptops

Given the likelihood of reduced access to IT suites, we have decided that all pupils in Upper 5, Lower 6 and Upper 6 may bring a personal laptop / tablet to school for their own use. Pupils who have been identified as benefitting from the use of a laptop as part of their access arrangements may also bring their own laptop to school for educational use.

Parental contact with school

You are asked to be organised in your communications with your child in order that the need to be in contact with them during the school day is minimised. In unforeseen circumstances when contact does have to be made during the school day, you are asked to email school on gateways@gatewaysschool.co.uk rather than to phone or otherwise attempt to access the school buildings during the course of the school day. No parental access to any of the school buildings will be permitted at any time, no matter the age of the child concerned.

Face coverings

We have taken the decision not to require pupils to wear face coverings in communal areas or when moving around the school site at this stage.

Part of our reasoning for this decision is that we are aware that, for some children, the wearing of a face covering can in itself cause anxiety. We are also aware that for some children, having been away from school for such a long time, there will be an underlying anxiety regarding returning to the school environment which we do not want to exacerbate. For children new to Gateways, facial cues and expressions are a pivotal part of settling in and feeling welcome and face coverings can inhibit this important part of social interaction. Gateways is fortunate in that it is a small school with small classes. Our procedures also mean that there will be minimal movement by the pupils around the school during the course of the school day. It is for all these reasons that we are not mandating the use of face coverings at the moment. However, should your child wish to use a face covering, we will not prevent them from doing so as long as they follow the correct procedure for the safe use of such a covering. Face coverings will be required for all High School pupils travelling on a school bus service and the detail of the requirements in this situation has been covered in a previous letter.

Our approach to the general wearing of face coverings remains under constant review and is subject to change at short notice. We would therefore advise that your child has access to a number of reusable fabric face coverings which can be brought into use overnight if necessary.

Headmistress: Dr T Johnson BSc (Hons), PhD, PGCE



Reminders

Uniform rules

Normal uniform rules will be in force from the 1st day of term. This means for example that hair should be of a natural colour and fully tied back if it touches the shoulder. Nail varnish and / or false nails are not permitted, neither are piercings apart from 1 stud in the lower lobe of each ear (High School only). Any other jewellery and make-up are not permitted.

Parents on site

You are reminded that only 1 parent should attend the school site at drop off and pick up time. Should your family travel arrangements mean that both parents need to travel together to and from the school site then only 1 parent should leave the car to effect the drop off and collection if necessary.

Illness

Should your child be exhibiting any symptoms of illness which could be attributed in any way to COVID-19, they MUST NOT attend school. These symptoms are any of the following:

- A higher than normal temperature
- A new and persistent cough
- Loss of or change to their sense of taste or smell
- A crushing headache
- An unexplained skin rash
- Stomach upset / vomiting / diarrhoea

In the event of any of the first 3 of these symptoms, a test for COVID-19 should be arranged asap by clicking [here](#). Please refer to the Risk Assessment and the Re-Opening Policy to see what to do after arranging for your child to take a test.

Lanyards

If your child still has their school lanyard at home, they must bring it to school with them on the first day back otherwise they will be issued with and charged for a replacement lanyard. If your child handed their lanyard in as requested as we entered lockdown, they will have their lanyard returned to them on the first day back in school.

I hope all of the above information is clear. Should you have any questions about any of the arrangements detailed in this letter or indeed any of the previous letters, then please address them in the first instance to:

- Prep School: Mrs Helen Wallis helen.wallis@gatewaysschool.co.uk
- High School: Mrs Karen Titman karen.titman@gatewaysschool.co.uk
- Sixth Form: Mr Martin Davison martin.davison@gatewaysschool.co.uk

I would like to finish by taking this opportunity to thank you for your attention and your patience in reading a sizeable quantity of information sent by me over the course of the last few months. I look forward to welcoming your child back to school and I hope that they are looking forward to settling back into a school routine which will be as normal as we can make it at this strange time.

Headmistress: Dr T Johnson BSc (Hons), PhD, PGCE



I also look forward to seeing many of you in the car park on Monday and Tuesday mornings, although having been caught up in the travel quarantine arrangements, this will not be until the second week of term as I have 1 more week of quarantine to see out before returning to the outside world. Mrs Wallis and Mrs Titman will however be present in the car park and are looking forward to welcoming parents and pupils back into school every morning next week.

Kindest regards,

Dr Tracy Johnson