

Oasis Academy Ryelands Newsletter

12th June 2020

Dear Parents and carers,

Well, I had written this week's newsletter in readiness to go out and then awoke to another morning of news and hearsay about what might or might not be happening regarding the further opening of schools over the coming weeks. Following this, the Government officially confirmed that they had back-tracked on their ambition to have all children back in school by the end of term. I never want our newsletter to become a forum for discussion of the latest political news, but it must be said that I am now never surprised by a sudden announcement or story that has massive implications for us as a school, and even more so for you as families. I fully appreciate for parents of children in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5, and especially for the children themselves, this is even greater uncertainty when you are longing to be back at school and for a sense of routine and normality. Rest assured that we will digest any guidance issued over the coming weeks and plan as best as possible to support you moving forward. It goes without saying, but you still need to hear it from me, that we miss you all greatly and will do all that we can, within the guidelines we are bound by, to ensure that we give your children an opportunity to increase contact with their teachers and each other, and most importantly, gain closure on a year that had brought so many memorable moments and experiences, despite the challenges we have faced together.

Can I also take this opportunity to thank those families who have returned to school over the past week for playing your part in helping ensure that the new routines and rules that are in place have been followed, which has allowed us to safely begin to reopen. The level of planning that has gone into every aspect of the school day has been phenomenal, as has the staff team's dedication and commitment to creating an environment that is safe, welcoming and centred on our children's needs and well-being. It has been a joy to hear children in the building and to see them playing around the grounds of the school. We have taken the first steps towards normality where the heart and soul of Oasis Academy Ryelands has returned.

I am aware that over the coming weeks more parents and carers may decide to send their children back to school. However if you do decide to do this, I would ask that you communicate with the school office by email as soon as you are intending to send your children back. Unfortunately, children will need to be placed on a waiting list as at the moment the school is operating at very near full capacity in terms of the number of rooms that we are using and the number of staff that we are deploying to teach the children.

I want to reiterate that the decision to send your child back to school (or not) is a personal one and the government have confirmed that there will be no penalties imposed on parents and carers who choose not to send their children back.

Thank you as always for your patience and understanding, along with the positive comments and feedback that have been so gratefully received by all, and for continuing to support us as a school community. In the meantime, have a good weekend and stay safe and healthy.

Thank you all again for your support,

Glenn and the Ryelands Team



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Black Lives Matter

We will all have shared in the shock, sadness and anger about the unlawful killing of George Floyd in America, and will be aware of the protests around the world demanding change and challenging institutional racism

In response, Steve Chalke has produced two videos that explain Oasis's position.

- [This video is suitable for all staff and secondary aged students.](#) This video has been sent to all Oasis employees, across the Oasis group of charities, and will be shared on OCL's website and social media channels. I feel that this is a video for parents/carers to understand Oasis's position to 'Black Lives Matter'.
- [This video is suitable for primary aged pupils.](#) We are going to be showing this video in school to discuss this important issue. As we have many children that are not in school I would ask that parents/carers watch it first and share it with their children.

In Oasis Academy Ryelands 65% of our children come from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. It is important to me for all our children to know that we do not tolerate this in school and this should not be acceptable in society at large. Our children deserve to feel safe and be respected now and in the future.

Snacks

As the National Fruit Scheme is suspended until September, a reminder to all those children in school that they may bring a healthy snack; fruit, cereal bars - no crisps, no chocolate - for break. Please also send your child in with their own named water bottle which should come home every day for a wash.

While We Can't Hug

While we can't all be together, we'd like to leave you with this lovely story about Hedgehog and Tortoise - enjoy! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PnnFrPaRgY>

Footwear

Although the children are allowed to wear their own clothes to school at the moment, footwear must be appropriate for the setting, therefore no open toe sandals, sliders, or flip flops should be worn.

A Reminder About Attendance And Punctuality!!

As before all this, school starts promptly for each bubble - and attendance is expected every day that that the bubble is due in school. Days off for birthdays or long weekends wouldn't have been sanctioned before! Re-establishing the HABIT of school attendance is vital if we are to secure the life chances and well-being of our children.

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Managing Our Whole School Health

We have had two weeks with no cases of illness in school. Children have been excellent at following our new regular hand-washing routines. However, everything tumbles in our new regime if a child comes into school ill, and possibly with COVID-19, so I will persist in reminding you not to send your child in if they are symptomatic.

YOU MUST keep your child off if they (or any of you) show any of the following symptoms:

- A high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature). Your child might seem fatigued.
- A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Testing is now available to anyone - including under 5s - who develops new coronavirus symptoms. To book a test, go to the national coronavirus testing website or phone 119. Testing is most effective within the first three days of a person experiencing symptoms. If you have any questions about coronavirus testing, please contact covid-19queries@camden.gov.uk.

We have gleaned that testing sites are mobile and locations change. We will ensure we have up to date information – just ask.

Wellbeing

As lock down measures are relaxed, some of us are reconnecting with friends, family and our communities. We are beginning to grieve the past and the “old normal.” Each and every one of us has experienced a loss; loss of friendships, loss of structure, loss of an education as well as some experiencing a loss of a loved one. Please visit our website to view the stages of grief and how these can help us identify our feelings and grieving process:

<https://www.winstonswish.org/coronavirus/> National Freephone Helpline: 08088 020 021 (open 9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday).

Home Learning

As you know, the home-learning is continuing for those children who are not in school, and you will continue have this sent to you via email on a Wednesday each week. The teachers have been putting in a huge amount of thought and care into what they are providing for your children, and we have all loved hearing and seeing what you have been up to.

I want to say thank you to all of the parents/carers for supporting their children with their home learning and for sending it in for the teaching staff to look at and respond to. As more and more staff return to front-line teaching, this could be more challenging for us to maintain at the current level of feedback, please be patient.

Entrance To The School Building

Please remember that at present no parents or carers are able to enter the building, including the Academy Office. If you need us, please contact us via email or telephone and we will come back to you as soon as we can.

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Return In September

At present, we have not received any guidance on reopening in September and what that will look like. We are currently planning on the premise that we will all be back in school, with alternative plans being developed should we have to continue a hybrid model of being in school and home learning. When we have any information about September, we will share it with you.

National Book Tokens

National Book Tokens is running a draw for schools to win £5000 for school libraries. It's a free prize draw and the more nominations you get the more chances there are to win. So please nominate us here <https://www.nationalbooktokens.com/schools> and tell all your friends & family!

What We Have Been Up To

Nursery

It has been lovely to welcome back children to Nursery. They have all been very excited to explore the alterations we've made to the layout and to play with their much-loved resources again.

They have really enjoyed themselves and have been chatting away as they've played, telling us their thoughts and news, singing along to songs and listening to stories.

Reception

It has been a wonderful week in Reception. We have loved welcoming back the children in Robin and Wren class. The children have been taught the new safety rules for being in class and for outdoor play. The children have impressed all the adults with their sensible and mature behaviour and have loved seeing their friends and being back at school. Our topic this week has been Disney, we have introduced the children to their bubble characters, Donald Duck, Daisy Duck, Pluto and Mickey Mouse. The children have enjoyed learning about the most famous Disney characters. We look forward to seeing the children again next week for Seasons Week.

Year1

Year 1 have had another great week! It was a pleasure to welcome back children from Sparrow class for the first time on Monday and Tuesday. All the children had huge smiles on their faces and really enjoyed their learning. They did some fantastic writing about Anansi and had great fun doing some yoga and arts and crafts activities. It was also fantastic to see the Starlings again on Thursday and Friday. They enjoyed starting a new art project as well as playing number bond tennis in maths (a great game to play at home too!).

Year 6

Year 6 have been reading 'Coming to England' by Floella Benjamin which they are enjoying. We have also had the police in the week and had the opportunity to ask questions. The children asked the police about their uniform and what their job responsibilities are. They have also been getting ready for secondary school through transition work.

Keyworker Children

We have been really pleased that we have been able to expand our key worker groups further in order to welcome more children back into the academy. Every morning it has been a delight to see such happy smiling faces. They have all impressed us with their great attitude to being back in school and wanting to do their best in their home learning. We are going to have a little treat this afternoon for all of their hard work throughout the week. We hope the children who have been at home are working just as hard and have been able to have a little treat too!