

STILL UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

The schools are having to work in ways that throws up new challenges every day. We are continually having to adjust what was once a normal way of working to ensure the environments are as Covid-secure as possible to keep everyone safe.



These changes and actions, against the backdrop of continually updated advice, guidance, recommendations and indeed directives, mean that all staff, (but especially the school leaders) are working in conditions that are mentally and emotionally exhausting as well as having a physical toll on the body. **I hope you will join me in thanking the teams at each school who are working tirelessly to adapt to new measures.**

We want to thank you also for your understanding and support throughout this whole period, with no immediate end in sight. We have already been told to expect various measures to be in place for the next 6 months. Very recently a senior DfE official said, 'Schools being partially or fully closed due to Covid cases will be a "way of life" until there is a vaccine'.



Across Newham, almost half the schools have had to send children and staff home over the last month following positive Covid test results. At Dersingham we have been very lucky to not have to collapse any bubbles. Unfortunately, at Central Park we have had to collapse a number of bubbles resulting in 100s of children and 10s of staff working from home. We can confirm that the initial infection came from community transmission, i.e. from outside school, but of course this is still very worrying that staff have been in school when potentially symptomatic. We wish those few staff a speedy recovery with hopefully no significant impact on their health.

Below is some more information regarding protective measures but can I remind everyone that if a child is sent home to isolate that means they should remain indoors, the same goes for staff, trying to minimise contact with the others in the household. The individual schools will have sent out information concerning actions to take but I do understand it becomes communication fatigue!



Newham Covid-19 Statistics

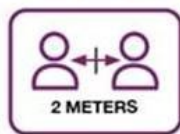
If you check the Newham Covid dashboard each week you will have noticed this week that Newham has substantially increased the number of positive cases of Covid. There has been a significant increase in numbers over the past month. Some would say this is inevitable with all that has been opened during the last 6-8 weeks. Check the local position here: <https://www.newham.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-dashboard/1>

It is currently triggering a 'red' response, along with the neighboring boroughs. Whilst Newham is still well below the level of community transmission compared with other parts of the UK, it is very worrying. It will start to fall on to a Government watch list and may result in local lockdown arrangements here. I know you will have heard the messages repeatedly but please do your bit to help stop this rise in cases.

KEEP NEWHAM SAFE



Wear a face covering



Keep your distance



Wash your hands



Download the NHS
Test & Trace App



Become a C19
Health Champion

Download the NHS Test & Trace app today to help keep you, your friends, family, and Newham safe.
www.newham.gov.uk/testandtrace

Become a Covid-19 Health Champion to Keep Newham Safe – sign up at
www.newham.gov.uk/covidhealthchampions

THE RETURN TO SCHOOL



I want to firstly continue to echo my comments made in my last newsletter and again say a huge thank you for putting your trust and faith in the schools by sending your children back. Both schools have been hovering around the high 80% to low 90% with attendance, which is better than the local average and national average. It has been a hugely anxious time for everyone and if anyone is still concerned about their child returning to school do contact us, our family workers will happily talk to you.

As requested by the Government, you know children have remained in 'bubbles' and ours have been arranged in year groups. We will do everything we can to keep children within their class sized 'bubbles'



most of the time but in large schools like ours it is impossible to run the school effectively with 20-30+ different bubbles. We will continue to be advised by the DfE and Public Health on bubble closures if and when required. Whilst we are educating your child, and not providing childcare like before, it does mean staff will move between the Year Group bubble classrooms. We will continue to look at this arrangement to minimise having to collapse the whole year group bubble. We will always err on the side of caution but know that the children are going to learn best in school with their teacher.

Thank you for supporting our current arrangements for working **a version of a 4 ½ day week at school**. You may recall that originally it was introduced as a health & safety measure, allowing the statutory PPA arrangements for teachers to take place without bringing in additional visitors to the school. To date we have not heard about any significant issues (and you know we support key worker children and those who will not be able to collect their children by leaving them to be taught in school). The arrangement over the next few weeks also gives a fantastic opportunity to trial blended learning and identify problems and concerns now should enforced school closures happen again. Do make sure that children complete work that has been set during the Friday afternoon session and also should your child be asked to isolate then please comply with the request. The arrangement will be more formally reviewed at the October half-term but in the meantime do not hesitate to pass your comments onto the Headteachers.



OFSTED's Visit to Dersingham:

Ofsted have not restarted inspections yet but from this month they will be visiting a large number of schools across England to report back on how well schools are adapting to opening fully to children. Dersingham took part in a pilot earlier this term (a practice) and the outcome was very successful. Unfortunately there is no 'official' letter to parents following the visit but they were very pleased to see that attendance was relatively good; staff had been trained in the health and safety measures; we had risk assessed the situation; put in measures to maintain safety; had a remote learning programme ready to launch when required; children and staff had settled back into school well and we had taken the context of our situation into account in everything we do. Whilst only a practice, this did not stop staff working fantastically well as a team to showcase Dersingham as the great school it is.

KEEP SAFE AND HELP PROTECT EACH OTHER

I wanted to get this newsletter out a little earlier than usual because of some of the important messages to give. This past month has felt very long!

Both schools will continue to work hard to ensure that your children get the best education they can, in school or from home. We want everyone to remain safe and well and we will do all we can in school but everyone linked to the school must do the same when they are outside the school premises.

You are being asked to please stay at home if you or someone you live with has symptoms; cover your face in public, wash your hands regularly, socially distance and please observe the rule of six.

The half term is a few weeks away but staff are looking forward to their break and I want to wish our families a safe break when we get to it.

Darren Williams, Executive Headteacher



HANDS



FACE



SPACE