

30 September 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

### Update on our Full Reopening

Thank you for your continued support in getting all students back into school safely over the past month. All of us are committed to providing the best education possible for your child, while securing the health and safety of our whole school community. Thank you for continuing to follow public health guidelines and encouraging your children to do the same. You will notice that we have made a slight change to our name. We are now officially Rooks Heath School.

You are already aware of the steps we have put in place to ensure the safe return of all students to school. We know that you will be keen to understand the impact that we have had in our first weeks of the term, and what our plans are to ensure all students catch up with any missed learning, and what will happen if a student or adult is asked to stay at home over the coming months.

That is why I am writing to you today in order to keep you fully informed. This letter will also be published on our website and is being sent to our governors and trustees.

<b>School re-opening</b>	We are fortunate to be able to open the school for the entire day. This half term, we have also opened up our Breakfast Club, starting with year 7 students and hope to be able to extend this to other students in due course. We are monitoring this closely before we introduce other students from other year groups as separate bubbles.
<b>Attendance</b>	It has been pleasing to see more than 99% of our students this term. We understand that due to the current context this is a figure that is constantly changing but we are pleased that students continue to learn at school. Thank you to parents who have dutifully contacted us where their child has taken leave from school and provided adequate reasons. Please continue to support our measures and where students are unwell with Covid-19 symptoms, they should remain at home and follow PHE/ NHS advice.
<b>Lunch arrangements</b>	Our new lunch arrangements have proven to be very effective. Students are kept in their year group bubble with allocated areas of the school in which to relax and socialise. Given the structure of our school, there are not enough indoor and outdoor spaces to accommodate the priority Covid-19 measures we have implemented. The indoor and outdoor areas are rotated so that we use the spaces fairly and so that every child has a sheltered area in which to eat a meal at least once during the day. Students like not having to wait in long queues to collect meals. The new 30-minute



	<p>slot, twice per day, allows students to decide which break they use for their main meal. Students already report this being calmer and more conducive to the ethos we want at Rooks Heath. The issues that the company which provides us with Parent Pay experienced, at the start of the term, have since been resolved.</p> <p>We are looking for ways to extend our outdoor coverage and have begun this process but we know this is not an instant fix. We will appreciate any support the parent community may be able to offer by way of contacts for canopies or alternative shelters.</p>
<b>Coverage of the curriculum</b>	<p>At KS4, teachers and department leads continue to follow the guidance from exam boards about the curriculum. For some subjects, there has been a slight reduction in assessed tasks, allowing for more teaching time on other aspects of the course, and this is welcomed by staff.</p> <p>In practical lessons, at KS3, there are some restrictions around the use of equipment and practical activities. This requires students, where possible, to bring their own equipment and has led to a reorganisation of the order of topics and activities taught.</p> <p>We recognise that there will be gaps in learning for students. In addressing the gaps in learning, we have decided to prioritise our Year 11 students as this year group is the year group who will feel the more pertinent impact of the loss in their education with just eight months until their GCSE examinations are due to begin. Assessment tasks have already begun in order to identify gaps in knowledge and attainment. Following this, interventions are being planned, both within the classroom and external to the classroom, including prioritised year 11 period 6 lessons, targeted revision and homework tasks.</p>
<b>Remote learning March - July 2020</b>	<p>Between March and July, Rooks Heath had excellent procedures for setting, monitoring and responding to work remotely. Work was set by every teacher and to every class, according to the weekly timetables. We are pleased to report that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 176 courses were run remotely during lockdown.</li> <li>• 5,247 assignments were provided by teachers.</li> <li>• 323 discussion topics were set up for students to engage with.</li> <li>• 3,982 files were uploaded by teachers to support the learning.</li> <li>• 202 media recordings were uploaded by staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Remote learning in the future</b>	<p>We are pleased to inform parents that the school has been moving to the use of a new learning platform 'Microsoft Teams'. Staff and students are receiving training on the use of this at present. This platform will enable the school to move towards delivering live lessons, should further lockdowns occur.</p>
<b>Mental health and wellbeing</b>	<p>The Student Support Hub and the Learning Support Department are always available to support students. Staff have undertaken additional PD linked to supporting students with mental health as</p>

	<p>they return to school. If your child feels that they need support with learning, wellbeing or mental health, they should visit either BF5 or BF8 and speak to a member of staff. Learning Support Assistants will be supporting students in lessons throughout the day.</p> <p>Staff are aware that if they are concerned about the wellbeing or safety of a student, they can contact the Safeguarding Team for urgent support.</p> <p>Students are regularly also reminded to access Kooth at <a href="http://www.kooth.com">www.kooth.com</a></p>
<p><b>Covid-19</b></p>	<p>We have unfortunately had confirmed cases we have been made aware of. You will have seen my letter which included the advice taken from the DFE as we are guided to do. We are fortunate that neither case required us to send students home. Please note that we will follow DFE guidance strictly should we become aware of any case of Covid-19. Please also note that all actions taken, are with the health and safety of the whole school population in mind.</p> <p>We are continuing to monitor our systems of control which includes the wearing of face coverings by staff on duties and allowing face masks to be worn by students. All our students have been excellent at following our social distancing guidance between year group bubbles and also with the use of the hand sanitising stations in place. It is important to note that in the classroom, DFE guidance recognises that the two metre distance will not always be possible between students. Thank you for your support with this very new and high priority situation.</p>

Please note that as per the DFE guidance, should we receive the unfortunate news of any positive cases of any members of our community, we will act quickly whilst maintain the dignity of all individuals as best as we can. We will be in touch with the DFE who will advise us on the next steps. DFE guidance also states that, *“Schools must not share the names or details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless essential to protect others.”*

The government have announced that they will provide laptops for more vulnerable children. We previously distributed the laptops made available to us by the Government during summer 2020 as requested by the DFE. We need your help to identify where our students have difficulties accessing IT. If you believe you may be eligible for a laptop, please click this link to access our survey to provide us with useful information: [What access to ICT facilities does your child have at home?](#) we will try to help, though we may not be able to do this in every case.



**ROOKS HEATH**  
COLLEGE  
*opportunity through learning*

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Our Remote Learning platform is designed to reflect the everyday learning experiences in classrooms, and the commitment students need to have to inspire others. It is designed to be an inclusive plan, that recognises technology has a key role, but understands that not everyone has access to the Internet or their own laptop or tablet all the time. As a result, there are 'paper only' resources which are available to appropriate students. These can be collected or delivered as required.

Thank you for your support in these challenging times. Please remember to follow public health guidance to keep everyone learning safely. Please see our new Covid-19 page on our website where we have provided useful information. We will keep this as up-to-date as we can.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Miriam Manderson  
**Headteacher**