



SOUTHRIDGE FIRST SCHOOL

September 2021



We hope you have had an enjoyable and restful summer holiday and made the most of the days when the sun was shining.

We are looking forward to seeing the children back in school from Thursday 2nd September and starting the new school year with a spring in our steps.

Included later in this newsletter are some of the updates raised in the government's operational guidance for schools during the COVID-19 pandemic which will be useful for you to see prior to the children returning.

Some key points to note before the children return are:

- We will no longer be asking adults to wear masks when on the school grounds.
- We will be continuing the One-Way system through the school grounds at drop-off and pick-up time.
- The school gates will open for drop-off at 8.45am and close at 8.55am (9am for Nursery).
- The school gates will open for pick-up at 3pm for Nursery; 3.15pm for Reception, and 3.20pm for Year 1-4. The gates will close again at 3.30pm.
- In the morning, children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 need to be handed over to their class teacher, while if you wish for your child in Year 3 and 4 to walk unaccompanied across the yard, you can drop them off at the gate. All children must be collected from their classroom door at home-time.
- We no longer insist that only one parent attends drop-off and pick-up.

Staff are looking forward to greeting their new classes and continuing your child's academic journey wrapped up in our Core Values of Friendship, Kindness, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility.

Building Works in School

Works have been completed in school over the summer break which have included upgrading roof-void fire breaks, emergency lighting, upgraded fire alarms and roof surface replacement.

Mr Harper has also been busy sprucing up our outdoor equipment to have it looking tip-top in preparation for the children returning.

Dates:

Wednesday 1st September: Teacher Training Day

Thursday 2nd September: Autumn Term Begins

Tuesday 14th September: New to Nursery Meeting 5pm

Wednesday 15th September: New to Reception Meeting 5pm

Tuesday 21st September: Individual School Photos

Friday 22nd October: Last day of Autumn 1st Half term

Monday 1st November: Start of Autumn 2nd half term

Friday 17th December: Last day of Autumn term

****This is a working list and will be updated once events are confirmed****

Routines in September

Due to the ever changing COVID-19 picture we still can not be absolutely certain of how school will look over the term ahead, but we can assure parents that we will be following advice from the local Public Health and Health & Safety teams.

While **we will continue our one-way system around school** and our drop off/pick up times will be resuming their pre-pandemic schedule.

Start of day:

The bottom gates (next to Nursery) will open at 8.45am for children to be dropped off at their classroom doors. Staff will be on duty to welcome the children into their classes.

The gates will close at 8.55am for main school (Reception-Year4) and 9am for our Nursery.

End of day:

The gates will re-open at 3.15pm for Reception pick-up, and then 3.20pm for pick-up from Year 1-4.

The gates will close again at 3.30pm.

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 need to be handed over to their class teacher, while if you wish for your child in Year 3 and 4 to walk unaccompanied across the yard, you can drop them off at the gate. **All children must be collected from their classroom door at home-time.**

Attendance

A reminder that we have been rightly proud of our school community over the past few years where we have been one of the best schools for attendance within the Local Authority. Our teachers also show their dedication with a fantastic attendance rate of over 99% last year. This is an essential part of the support, education and nurture that they are able to offer your children and has been especially important over the previous year. I would ask you to avoid booking any holidays that would impact on your child's attendance at school - your support in this matter is very much appreciated. Our school term dates are available from the School Office section of our website. If you need your child to miss school for an exceptional circumstance then please complete a Leave of Absence form (available [here](#) on our school website).

Updated Government Advise for Schools regarding COVID-19 and how it impacts us here at Southridge

"As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people's education - particularly given that the direct clinical risks to children are extremely low, and every adult has been offered a first vaccine and the opportunity for 2 doses by mid-September." (www.gov.uk)

Here at school we regularly review and update our risk assessments and our outbreak management plan, while taking guidance and advice from Public Health England the local Health and Safety Team.

Government no longer recommend that it is necessary to keep children in consistent groups ('bubbles'). We will be taking opportunities to slowly bring the children back together but will be trying to avoid unnecessary crowding.

Close contacts will now be identified by NHS Test and Trace, not by school.

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and either fully vaccinated or below the age of 18 years and 6 months. If this happens, your child will need to take a PCR test and we would ask you to use Lateral Flow Tests for the following 2 weeks, **but they can attend school as normal**.

Government advise that face coverings are no longer necessary, however we will making this a personal choice for visitors into the building and staff in communal areas.

We will continue to prioritise:

- good hygiene for everyone (regular handwashing and "Catch it, Bin it, Kill it" approach with coughs and sneezes).
- appropriate cleaning regimes - we will be continuing our additional cleaning schedule that was introduced at the beginning of the pandemic.
- keeping occupied spaces well ventilated.
- following public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Children with symptoms (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, - this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours, a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) **MUST** still self-isolate unless they have a subsequent negative PCR result.

Attendance

School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is a priority to ensure that as many children as possible regularly attend school.

Positive Cases

Children will still need to self-isolate if they return a positive COVID-19 test. Self-isolation has to last 10 full days **after** the date your symptoms began.

Remote Education

If a child needs to self-isolate due to an **asymptomatic** case of COVID-19 then the class teachers will provide home learning activities.