

The Rydal Academy

Rydal Road,

Darlington,

DL1 4BH

Email: officeadmin@rydal.swiftacademies.org.uk

Website: www.therydalacademy.co.uk

Chief Executive: Mr D Judson, BEd, NPQH

Coronavirus Closure Update – 29th May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Now that the government have confirmed their 5 tests have been met I would like to outline the measures we are putting in place to make The Rydal Academy a safe working environment for both pupils and staff.

Arrangements for the potential expansion of partial opening of The Rydal Academy

During this period of phased reopening I want to be as open as possible with parent/carers about the arrangement we are putting in place, while making sure that everyone accessing the school site sticks to the rules of social distancing and any policies which may have changed.

‘School’ is going to feel very different in the coming weeks, especial for younger children. It will not be the vibrant and active environment they are familiar with.

The safety of children, families and our staff is at the heart of the very difficult decisions the leadership team and Directors of Swift Academies have had to make. We will look to support you as much as we can in making the very important decision of whether to send your child back to school at the present time by providing as much information as possible. We will of course support any returning children through the significant adjustments that will be required should they return to school. We will also continue to provide a high quality of materials and support for those children who are learning from home.

The initial arrangements for children returning to school (Year 1, Year 6) and continuation of provision for Priority children (Key Worker and Vulnerable children in Nursery, Reception, Years 2, 3, 4 and 5) are:

Date for return

Our current intention, **dates are subject to change pending any changes in government guidance or onsite requirements**, is:

- Early Years (Nursery and Reception) Priority Children (Key Workers and Vulnerable Children) will be moved into their own Bubble from Monday 8th June.
- Priority Children in Year 1 to 6 (Key Workers and Vulnerable Children) will be moved into their own Bubble from Monday 8th June.
- We are proposing Year 6 children who are returning and not accessing Priority Children provision will return to school from Monday 15th June. ***This will be confirmed on Wednesday 10th June.**
- We are proposing Year 1 children who are returning and not accessing Priority Children provision will return to school from Monday 22nd June. ***This will be confirmed on Wednesday 17th June.**
- We **will not** currently extend opening beyond Priority Pupils (Key Worker and Vulnerable children) / Nursery and Reception due to a lack of space on site.

Attendance

Parents will not be fined if children do not attend. School will make a record of parents' decisions to attend or not. Once returned Year 1 and Year 6 registers will be completed daily parents should inform schools of absence as normal.

Sibling attendance

The siblings of pupils in Year 1 and Year 6 in year groups which have not returned to school (Nursery, Reception, Year 2, 3, 4, 5) will not be able to access school at the present time unless they are identified as Priority children (Key Worker or Vulnerable children)



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Dual registration Priority (Key Worker or Vulnerable children) Nursery pupils

Pupils should only attend one setting. We will engage in a discussion with parent/carers on which setting they would prefer their children to attend.

Shielding

Clinically extremely vulnerable pupils (will have received a letter / text from NHS)

Children should stay at home and continue to shield until the end of June, this advice could change.

Children living with Clinically extremely vulnerable people in their household (will have received a letter / text from NHS)

Pupils who live with someone who is Clinically extremely vulnerable should stay home while the Clinically extremely vulnerable person continues to shield, this advice could change.

Clinically vulnerable pupils (former high risk but did not get a letter / text from NHS)

Children's parents should follow medical advice as to whether to send them to school. Children who live with someone who is Clinically vulnerable can attend school.

School places

Any parent/carers who indicated they **did** want their child to return to school during our phone calls on Tuesday 19th May (Year 1 and 6) have been provisionally allocated a place, as well as any children who are already on our list to access our Priority children group (Key Worker or Vulnerable children). **All parent/carers of children who are currently on the list to attend (Priority, Year 1 and Year 6) will receive an email by Friday 5th June confirming your place and detailing the Bubble / Pod your child will be attached to and start and end times.** If you no longer require a place please inform the school by email or phone.

Capacity will be capped for each Bubble as follows due to limitations in terms of space and staffing:

**Subject to change pending any changes in government guidance or onsite requirements*

Early Years (Nursery & Reception) Priority Children (Key Workers & Vulnerable Children) Bubble = **21 pupils**

Priority Children in Year 1 to 6 (Key Workers & Vulnerable Children) Bubble = **60 pupils**

Year 6 Bubble (Possibly moving to Year 5) = **54 Pupils**

Year 1 Bubble = **39 pupils**

Parent/carers (Year 1 and Year 6) who indicated they **did not** want their child to return to school **or did not respond** and would now like their child to attend will need to inform the school. If all places have already been allocated you may be placed on a waiting list. Parents should expect to wait up to a week to access a school place even if spaces are available. **Where spaces are available you will receive an email confirming your place, start date and detailing the Bubble / Pod your child will be attached to and start and end times.**

Any parent/carers of children who arrive at school without a confirmed place will not be permitted entrance.

Any parent/carers who meet the Key Worker or Vulnerable child criteria and require their child to access school should let the school know by email or phone. **Where spaces are available you will receive an email confirming your place, start date and detailing the Bubble / Pod your child will be attached to and start and end times.** If all places have already been allocated you may be placed on a waiting list.

Where parent/carers have decided their child will not return to school, the decision will be recorded by the school. If we have not received contact from parent/carers we will contact you from the first morning your child should have returned to school as we would during normal opening periods to confirm the absence.



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Priority children

We will continue our offer for Priority children (Key worker or Vulnerable children) with an extended day between 7:30am and 5pm. Priority children will be split into two Bubbles from Monday 8th June: 1) Early Years Priority Children's (Nursery and Reception) based in the Nursery area of the school) and Priority Children in Year 1 to 6. (Based in Year 2, 3 and 4 classrooms)

Priority children in Year 1 and Year 6 will continue to access the Priority children Bubble with the extended day. Children in **Year 1 and Year 6 Priority children (Key worker or Vulnerable children) will not be able to access the Year 6 or Year 1 Bubble when the relevant cohorts return to school** to avoid mixing between groups.

Transport

The school bus **will not be running** until further notice.

Parents and children should consider walking and cycling where possible, or driving if necessary. They should avoid the use of public transport where possible, particularly at peak times.

Government has published guidance on [how to travel safely](#), which schools, parents and young people can refer to when planning their travel, particularly if they need to use public transport.

Wraparound care

Breakfast club, Youth club, extra-curricular clubs **will not be running** until further notice.

Uniform

No uniform is required, children should wear **comfortable clothes** for exercise and class work. Children's' **clothes should be washed daily** as part of decontamination process when they get home.

Resources and reading books.

Children should not bring any items to and from school, with the exception of a packed lunch (if they usually bring one – please put this in a disposable bag if possible) and a coat. This includes reading books, toys, work and comforters.

Sun cream

Please apply sun cream before coming to school.

Symptoms at home

Any pupils with symptoms or symptoms within their household should **not attend school** and should self-isolate in line with the latest government guidance. Anyone with a new, continuous cough, a high temperature or a change in their sense of smell or taste is asked to immediately report these symptoms and book a test at nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119 if you have no internet access.



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Start and end times and pick-up / drop-off protocol

Arrangements will be sent out to individual parent/carers in the confirmation of place email before children return.

	Early Years Priority Children (Key worker or Vulnerable in Nursery and Reception)	Priority children (Key worker or Vulnerable in Year 1 to Year 6)
Site entrance and exit	Nursery gate (Pod 1) Black Path Side gate (Pod 2)	Main school entrance (Pod 1 – 5) Year 4 gate (Pod 6 – 10)
Pupil entrance/exit	Nursery foyer door (Pod 1) Community Hub door (Pod 2)	Year 2 door (Pod 1 – 5) Year 4 door (Pod 6 – 10)
Drop-off time	Individually assigned between 7:30am and 8:30am	Pod assigned between 7:30am and 8:15am
Pick-up time	Individually assigned between 4pm and 5pm	Pod assigned between 4pm Pod 2 – 4:10pm and 4:45pm

Protocol

- Try to avoid use of public transport in line with government guidance.
- Only one family member to accompany the children.
- **Pupils must arrive and be collected at the indicated times.**
- Parent/carers and children to socially distance in queuing system.
- No gathering on school grounds or at gates.
- Follow distancing one way system signs and markings on site.
- Handover children to staff on door while observing social distancing.
- No bags or items to be brought in to school (only lunch boxes and coats)
- No books or resources to go home.
- Pupils wash hands immediately on arrival.

Details of start and end times and pick-up / drop-off protocol for children returning in the Year 6 Bubble will be confirmed on Wednesday 10th June and for children returning in the Year 1 Bubble on Wednesday 17th June. We are working towards timings similar to normal school times but staggered for each group. We will not be offering the extended day. Arrangements will be sent out to individual parent/carers in the confirmation of place email before children return.

Groupings – Bubble / Pods

We will be setting up mini-schools or 'Bubbles'. Children and staff will stay within their Bubbles in a designated area of the school to avoid mixing with other groups. Within each Bubble children and staff will be sorted into 'Pods', we will limit contact with others in their Bubble where possible. Children will stay together in their Pods but some staff will work between Pods within the Bubble. Any staff who work between Bubbles will either strictly adhere to social distancing guidelines or wear PPE.

Children are unlikely to be in their own class group, room or with their own teacher as children from across the cohort will be group depending on numbers and pupils needs. We will aim to make sure your child is with some friends or familiar staff if possible.



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Bubbles

Each Bubble will have its own:

Staff – bubble leader; pod teachers/teaching assistants; cover staff; pastoral support team, lunch staff, cleaners.

Spaces - entrance/exit, Pod base rooms, Pod assigned outdoor areas, toilets, symptoms isolation room, pastoral support room, Leaders office

Pod base rooms

Each Pod will have a base room. Furniture will be reduced to a minimum with soft furnishings and hard to clean items removed. Seating will be as space as possible and not face to face in Year 1 and Year 6. Children will be assigned their own resources (pencil case, pencil, colour pencils, rubber, pencil sharpener, exercise book / workpack, laptop). Shared resources will be kept to a minimum and cleaned after use. There will be regular cleaning of touch surfaces. Windows will be open for ventilation. Doors will be propped open if safe to do so to avoid touching. Tissues and hand gel will be provided in each base room.

Pod assigned outdoor areas

Designated outdoor areas have been assigned to each Pod within a Bubble. Outdoor areas will be used as much as possible for exercise, breaks and activities as they limit the chance of symptoms being passed on. There will be no use of shared resources or contact activities. Playground equipment will not be in use. Touch equipment will be cleaned after use. Pupils will wash hands when coming back into the building.

Toilets

Each Bubble will be assigned its own toilet areas. Where possible access will be staggered and supervised by staff to limit mixing between Pods within the Bubble. Toilet areas will be set up to support social distancing.

Medical

Pupils who have had a toileting accident should be encouraged to clean themselves and change themselves where possible. The revised Intimate care policy will be followed by staff.

The revised First Aid and Accident policy will be followed by staff.

Children with inhalers should keep them on their person at all times.

Learning and curriculum

Children will continue to access a relaxed curriculum in line with remote learning provision we have put in place and the support Priority children (Key Worker and Vulnerable children) have been receiving in school. Year 1 focus will mainly be on Phonics and Reading. Year 6 focus will mainly be on Secondary readiness and Reading, Writing and Maths.

Children in Years 1 to 6 will be required to sit at their desks and complete activities independently or with socially distanced teacher direction or to assess online activities (Mathletics, ReadingEggs) or lessons (Oak Academy, BBC Bitesize) Children in Nursery and Reception will be required to remain in their allocated area or work station and play with individually allocated toys or equipment.

When in outdoor areas children will continue to be required to socially distance and will not be permitted to play contact games or share resources.



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Pastoral support

Staff will be assigned to each Bubble to provide 1-to-1 support or talking time for any children struggling with the return to school or who have experienced trauma or loss during the closure period.

Behaviour and conduct

The behaviour policy will be reviewed and amended to reflect changes in the provision and current government advice. Where we have concerns around any children being able to effectively follow the rules and routines we put in place a risk assessment will be completed alongside parents/carers.

*See revised behaviour policy on the school website.

Lunches

For children who have a school meal a packed lunch will be provided. Children will have their lunch at their assigned desk in their Pod base room. Lunches will be charged at the normal rate.

A packed lunch will consist of a bottle of water, mini muffin, lightly salted crisps, yogurt, piece of fruit, a biscuit and a choice of:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Option 1	Cheese sandwich	Egg sandwich	Tuna sandwich	Ham sandwich	Cheese sandwich
Option 2	Sausage roll	Margarita pizza finger	Sausage roll	Margarita pizza finger	Sausage roll
Option 3	Tuna melt Panini	Pepperoni and cheese Panini	Ham and cheese Panini	Chicken tikka Panini	Pizza melt Panini
Option 4	Bacon and cheese twist	Beef burger in bun	Chicken wrap	Sausage in a bun	Fish finger butty

*Any children with allergies will be provided with alternative options as necessary.

Free school meal vouchers

Children who are entitled to a Free School Meal and are currently receiving vouchers who are not returning to school will continue to receive vouchers.

Social distancing guidelines (school/home)

School – social distancing will take the form of the actions outlined above including: reduced mixing and limiting the number of people children and staff spend time with through use of the Bubble and Pod systems; minimising contact through spacing, limiting shared resources and cleaning of touch surfaces; avoiding face to face time; washing clothes regularly (daily is best); no changing for PE; keeping rooms well ventilated.

Moving around the school – a one way system will be marked out around the school for any movement to toilets or outdoor areas. If children or staff pass others during movement around the school they will be encouraged not to talk or have face-to-face contact, a thumbs-up will have to suffice.

Home – social distancing guidelines should continue to be adhered to out of school.



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Hygiene practices

Please remind your children of good hygiene practices including hand washing; catch it! Bin it! Kill it! and touching their face as little as possible. Staff will give regular reminders and related activities once back in school.

Useful information can be found at:

https://e-bug.eu/eng_home.aspx?cc=eng&ss=1&t=Information%20about%20the%20Coronavirus

Children / Staff showing symptoms in school

The office will contact parent/carers to collect the child. If a child is awaiting collection, they will be moved to the allocated Bubble Isolation Room with appropriate adult supervision. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned before being used by anyone else. PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if direct personal care is needed and a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs). In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff has helped someone with symptoms they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Bubble Isolation Rooms will be deep cleaned after use. Staff will advise parent/carers to follow government guidance.

Anyone with a new, continuous cough, a high temperature or a change in their sense of smell or taste is asked to immediately report these symptoms and book a test at nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119 if you have no internet access. Families with suspected symptoms in the household or contacted through Track and trace should access the following guidance [guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#).

Confirmed cases of COVID19

If a child or member of staff is confirmed as testing positive for COVID19:

- the individual with Covid will be required to self-isolate for 7 days.
 - their household will be required to self-isolate for 14 days.
 - Children and staff in their Pod will be required to isolate for 14 days, but members of their household will not be required to isolate unless they begin to show symptoms.
- *A child or staff with a negative test can return to school without a period of self-isolation.

Deep clean and cleaning

The school will follow COVID19 Cleaning of Non-healthcare settings guidance. The entire school site has been deep cleaned. There will be a daily deep cleaning of all areas in use. Continual cleaning of toilets will take place after use with restocking of soap and hand gel. Tissue bins will be emptied regularly. Any shared resources will be cleaned after use.

PPE (Children / Staff)

Children should not wear PPE as Department for Education guidelines suggest it is unsafe to do so.

Children will not be permitted to wear PPE on site.

Some staff will wear PPE depending on their duties.



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Policies

The Safeguarding policy; Behaviour policy; Intimate care policy; First aid and accident policy have all been updated to reflect the current situation and are available on the school website.

Communication

Parent/carers **will not** be permitted to access the school building at any time. Communication will continue through email and phone calls.

Preparing your child for a return to school

The school environment will look and feel very different for any Year 1, Year 6 or Priority children (Key Worker and Vulnerable children) returning to school. **To support you in preparing your child for this we will share a video showing the environment and procedures in each Bubble by Friday 5th June.**

We would also encourage you to revisit the hygiene practices outlined in this letter regularly with your child before their return to school

Remote learning

We will continue to send work packs home at the end of each half-term for the following half-term for all pupils until the school is fully reopened. Weekly message to each class will also continue, although this may not be from the class teacher if they are providing in school support. Broader communication with staff through email and Tapestry or Marvellous Me will continue but responses may come from allocated staff or may be limited due to on-site commitments of class teachers.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE ARRANGEMENTS MAYBE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DEPENDING ON GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE.

We look forward to welcoming some children back in the coming weeks, where possible, and supporting the rest of the school as you continue to shield.

Thanking you for your continued support during these exceptional times,

Mr J.M.Armitage B.Ed (Hons); NPQH
Headteacher

