

28th August 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

I am sure you will be aware that the government has announced that schools should fully reopen from the start of the upcoming autumn term, September 2020. This has been decided on the basis of:

* The prevalence of coronavirus decreasing
* Time out of school being detrimental to children’s development
* The low risk to children of becoming severely ill from coronavirus

We’re looking forward to welcoming everyone back and we’re working hard to make the school a safe, enjoyable environment for all. You will find enclosed with this letter, two important documents for you to read, The ‘[**Summary Eastlea Risk Assessment**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oZuJprZ7CxwqnuNxwk0hD7jCx5y0lsMnmzy6X7Sk43s/edit?usp=sharing)**’** parent information and ‘[**Timings of the School Day**](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QDNgznPB2JoK3QHETMPoiQBhEPM2TRpt/view?usp=sharing)**’**.

Outlined below are some key changes that you will need to be aware of and the expectations we have of all our parents and carers in helping everyone return safely.

**Attendance**

In March when the coronavirus outbreak was increasing across the country, the government conveyed that parents/carers would not be penalised or sanctioned for their child’s non-attendance at school.

These circumstances have now changed. All children (including those who are shielding or self isolating) are now expected back in school for the new academic year in September, as the usual rules on school attendance will be reintroduced.

We want to remind parents/carers that it is their duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

We are mindful that some children will still be shielding or self-isolating due to them having had symptoms or a positive test result themselves, however the shielding advice paused on 1 August. This means that even children who were shielding can also return to school, as can those who have family members who were shielding.

**Executive Headteacher:** Charlotte Robinson

**Head of School:** Sarah Morgan

**Eastlea Community School**

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We are also aware that some children may remain under the care of a specialist health professional and may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school. If this is the case for your child, please inform the school as soon as possible so that we can discuss the best possible solution for educating your child.

Finally, we want to reassure parents/carers that the school has various measures in place to reduce the risk of spreading the coronavirus in school, so it is absolutely crucial that your child is fully prepared for returning to school in September.

### **If you or your child have symptoms of Coronavirus**

Students must **not** come into school if they have symptoms of Coronavirus or if a member of their household has symptoms.

* Anyone who displays symptoms of Coronavirus can and should get a test. Tests can be booked online through the NHS testing and tracing website [https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk](https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/antigen/name)
* You will be expected to provide details of anyone you have been in close contact with if you were to test positive for Coronavirus or if asked by NHS Test and Trace.
* Parents are asked to inform the school immediately of the results of the test.

**Travel to school**

Where possible students should walk, cycle or have a parental lift to school but if they must use public transport then they must adhere to the government guidelines to keep themselves safe. This includes wearing a face covering whilst travelling.

If your child travels to school and wears a face mask, please provide them with a sealable plastic bag in which to keep their face mask when they are not wearing it.

[Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer travel guidance for passengers](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers)

**The new school day**

The school will be operating year group ‘bubbles’. Part of this will mean that different year groups arrive and leave at different times and use different entrances. Students will no longer be using the main reception entrance on Pretoria Road; instead they will be using entrances on Exning Road (to the side of the school) and Chester Road. The entrance they use will be dependent on their year group. These measures allow for effective social distancing and infection control. The full timings of the day for each year group are enclosed. Below is a quick reference of the start and finish times:



|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Arrive:** | **Leave:** |
| Year 7 | 8.45am - Exning Road Gate | 2.45pm - Exning Road Gate |
| Year 11 | 8.45am - Chester Road Gate | 2.45pm - Chester Road Gate |
|  |  |  |
| Year 8 | 9.00am - Exning Road Gate | 3.00pm - Exning Road Gate |
| Year 10 | 9.00am - Chester Road Gate | 3.00pm - Chester Road Gate |
|  |  |  |
| Year 9 | 9.15am - Exning Road Gate | 3.15pm - Exning Road Gate |

Please ensure your child is on time. This will avoid unnecessary ‘bubble mixing’ and ensure all lessons can start promptly with minimal interruptions.

We kindly request that parents do not congregate in groups outside the school gates. All visits to the school will need to have an appointment agreed in advance.

From September, students will be grouped within their year until further notice. Groups will not be permitted to mix with any other year groups at this time, including during break and lunch. We will continually review the effectiveness of enforcing these groups, and notify you if any changes are made.

We understand that some students may find this transition back into school and a new routine challenging or stressful; however, we are committed to supporting each individual throughout this period.

**Food and Drink**

For the first half term we will not be serving hot meals in the Dining Hall instead we will serve a ‘bagged’, sandwich lunch. This is to speed up the service in the Dining Hall and ensure that we maintain social distancing. Children can also bring their own packed lunch to school.

Unfortunately, we will not have a breakfast club for the first half term and we will not be serving food at breaktime. You may wish to send your child to school with a snack if they wish to eat before lunch. We have water fountains around the school, however, their use will be limited to filling water bottles only. This means that your child should bring a water bottle with them so that they can re-fill it throughout the day.



**Curriculum**

Although some changes will be required to reflect the teaching time that was lost during the lockdown, we will continue to teach a broad and balanced curriculum.

Please note that all school extracurricular activities will currently be suspended and reviewed alongside government advice. Intervention sessions will continue on line after school hours and the timetable will be posted on the school website when these commence.

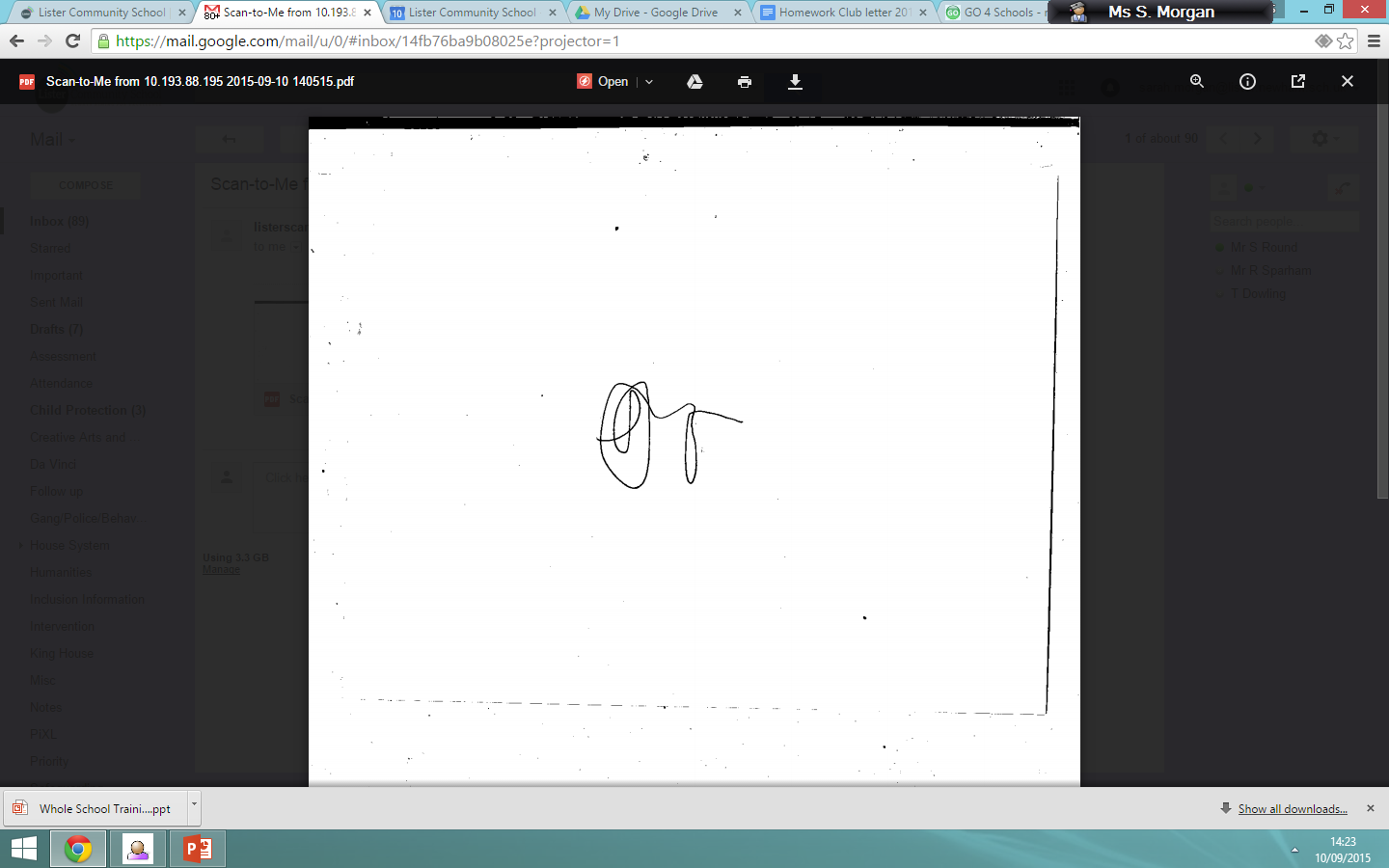
**Pastoral support and behaviour**

We’re aware that the lockdown has been a difficult time for many of us, including our students. We want to do our best to support your child so please let us know if you think your child might be anxious about returning to school or if they have experienced any difficulties during lockdown, for example a bereavement.

Behaviour at Eastlea is expected to be outstanding and all students will need to follow the school rules. The new school behaviour policy can be found on our school website, if any parents wish to have a hard copy you can request it by emailing [info@eastlea.newham.sch.uk](mailto:info@eastlea.newham.sch.uk). Parents will be contacted immediately if their child is not following the school protocols, we have in place to keep our community safe.

I am very happy to be welcoming all of our students back and thank you for your continued support

Yours sincerely



Sarah Morgan

**Head of School**