

# Ramsgate Arts Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

Can I start by saying a thank you to the whole RAPS community for your overwhelming support this year. In such difficult circumstances, it has been amazing how the community has really pulled together to ensure that we have been able to navigate this tricky time with as few bumps in the road as possible. I always knew we had a solid school community, but these past few months have proved to me that our RAPS family is incredibly strong, and for that, I am both humbled and extremely proud.

The onset of the pandemic has set precedents that few of us could ever have thought we would face, and clearly new regulations are still evolving. What it has clearly demonstrated, is our ability to be flexible; to bend and change when necessary. Again, I am so grateful for the adaptability that our RAPS community has demonstrated. This has undoubtedly made my job easier over the past five months as we have done our best to unpick Government guidelines and put into practise advice given. As I have said many times before, the well-being and safety of your children and our staff is always pivotal to all decisions made.

Although 2019-2020 has clearly been an unorthodox year, there have been so many positives for the school as a whole and RAPS continues to drive forward to be the best it can possibly be and to ensure that every child really does have 'One Childhood – One Chance'!

When I look back at the newsletters I have written across this academic year, or look at our press releases (which can all be found on the school website) the RAPS community has taken part in so many wonderful, inspiring projects. The list is long! From pop-up theatre groups who have performed at the Edinburgh Festival; the Big Draw – where parents and children took part in a fabulous drawing event; having opportunities to work with world-renowned artists like Conrad Shawcross in the 'Pioneering Places' project; the Turner Prize Winners' Assemble; Oscar Murillo in the 'Frequencies' project; our very own 'Not-the-Turner Prize Exhibition' that we hosted at Silverland Gallery; or the Turner Prize tours that our children conducted to the public at the Turner gallery in Margate – so many wonderful memories have been created since September. We have also run projects centred around our pupil's well-being; the children were encouraged to see the real value of sleep and were asked to consider their sleeping patterns in the 'Sleep-Easy' project. Both community and world-wide causes have been supported through raising money for 'Aussie Aid' and 'Care for the Koalas', as well as 'Ramsgate Books for Change'; inspired by our anti-racist work and the Black Lives Matter movement. The Parent Council's fabulous Christmas Fayre and comedy nights both raised money for our school, enabling us to develop brilliant projects such as our fabulous new outside playground. Our music has gone from strength to strength and we have seen music awards given to us for our commitment to high-quality music provision; RockSteady concerts; Live @ RAPS; classical performances such as the BBC's 'Kidenza Orchestra'. Our 'Take One Picture' project was incredible and our work is now exhibited in the National Gallery. We have been featured in the RSA's publication about Arts –rich schools... and I nearly forgot our Shakespeare week! All of this in the space of just six months and this is even before I start unpicking what the teachers provide each child every day with our rich English curriculum, our inspirational topics, arts, trips, parents' workshops... the list just goes on and on!

How we have blossomed from a tiny seed of a school that once consisted of two portacabins in Chilton's playground, where we stressed about pupil numbers! We have very much grown into a school with a heart and

## 'One Childhood One Chance'

Chilton Primary School, Ramsgate Arts Primary School and Upton Junior School are operated by Viking Academy Trust which is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 09449979. The Registered Office is at Chilton Primary School, Chilton Lane, Ramsgate, Kent, CT11 0LQ. Viking Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



soul; a fabulous community of children, parents and staff who make RAPS the amazing place that it is today. Indeed, there is no more need to stress about pupil numbers! We are now oversubscribed - every year group is full with waiting lists. This also applies to our new intake this year – we are full and had over 150 expressions of interest, which is more than our ‘frenemies’ at Chilton had (Mrs Law, the head of Chilton, and I are always in healthy competition to see who has the best school)!

In September, we are very much looking forward to welcoming all of the children back when Term 1 starts on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> but I know that some of you may well still feel anxious about how ‘normal’ school will work. I hope that this information will help to reassure you that we will be taking every measure at our disposal to keep our school community safe.

I don’t want to drown you in information so here is the brief outline:

- School doors will open at 8:15 and close at 8:30 to allow a ‘fluid’ entry and avoid over-crowding – please do not arrive on the school site prior to 8:15.
- All children in Yrs 1-6 will enter via the gate by the dance studio, Yrs 1 and 2 will enter the school building via their classroom doors; Yrs 3-4 will enter via the playground door at the back of the foyer and Yrs 5-6 will walk along the side of the building and enter school via the door by the library.
- We will operate a one-way system and parents will leave via the Newington Road gate.
- Children can be taken around to classrooms by one parent. If your child is old enough to be dropped off at the dance-studio gate to walk around to class by themselves, that would help us maintain social-distancing at drop-off time.
- The back carpark drop-off facilities will be temporarily closed as this will be used as a playground.
- We will encourage parents to leave the school site swiftly to avoid over-crowding.
- Inside, children will remain in their class ‘bubbles’ and will only mix with those children during the time that they are in their classrooms.
- Outdoor play will be zoned for year groups and children will be able to mix with other children in their year group
- Our cleaning kits in each classroom and learning space along with our regular cleaning regimes will continue.
- We will teach the children about hygiene measures – hand washing will be frequent and hand sanitiser readily available in classrooms and around the school.
- Staff will be able to move between classes but we will try to limit that movement where possible.
- Each class will have at least one Teaching Assistant.
- Group work (including phonics) will continue, but will be conducted within a bubble.
- PE will go ahead, outdoors only. Children in Yrs 3-6 will need to come to school in their PE kits on their PE days as we do not have adequate space to separate changing facilities.
- Lunchtimes will be slightly staggered to allow for the separation of groups inside the building and hot school meals will run as usual. Children may eat in the hall or their classrooms, depending on year group. Lunchtimes will still be one hour long.
- Our curriculum will initially focus on English, Maths, well-being and PSHE as we reintroduce the children to the routines of the school day. We will gradually introduce the wider curriculum across Term 1.
- **The KS2 Arts curriculum will be taught from 2.15 -4.15 but this will not start until Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September. KS2 children will finish at 3.00 on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September.**
- The end of the day school will finish as usual –KS1 will finish at 3.00 and KS2 at 4.15 on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. School finishes at 3.00 on Friday for everyone.
- With the rules around groupings of children and maintaining ‘bubble’ integrity, to start Term 1, we will only be able to run a limited After School Club.
- After School Club will run until 5.45, but there will be a restriction on numbers in each year group. We will try to extend this provision as and when we can.
- **There will be no Breakfast Club for Term 1, but we will try to offer this provision as soon as we can.**

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- We will begin the process of organising this next week, and will be in touch then regarding places and arrangements.
- There will be no additional after school clubs for Term 1.
- An announcement on the Kent Test is due on 20<sup>th</sup> July, but I expect this to be delayed until October.
- We encourage parents to use email and the telephone to speak with members of staff to limit people on site.
- Parents will not be allowed inside the building apart from where absolutely necessary.
- If children present with Covid-19 symptoms, they must be kept away from school until they have been tested and have obtained a negative result.
- Children at school who present with Covid-19 symptoms will be sent home and parents asked to obtain a test – they will not be able to return until a negative result has been obtained. Please note, test results do come quickly – within 24-48 hours!
- Should a child test positive, we will take and act upon PHE advice in terms of isolation periods – this may mean a class ‘bubble’ will be required to isolate at home.

I will write before the start of Term 1 to update you all with further details regarding how we intend to start the new school year and, of course, I will keep you informed as things progress. In school, we have all been working within Government guidance for some time now and it all seems very much the norm to us, however, I am mindful that this may seem very alien to those of you who haven't been attending school in this period of time. Please rest assured that we are always entirely focused on supporting both parents and children and our aim is to ensure that the return to school and settling-in period runs as smoothly and as stress-free as possible.

And finally, as a growing school, we are looking forward to welcoming several new members of staff who will join us in September. I would therefore like to introduce the following staff to our RAPS team: Miss O'Flaherty will be teaching in Year 1; Miss Okai will be in Year 2; Mrs Meikle will be in Year 3, and Ms Goode, who will be joining the Year 6 team. Sadly, we say good bye to Miss Aitken, whom we have watched grow from a TA to an amazing teacher. We wish her well and hope that she keeps in touch.

Have a lovely summer and we can't wait to see you **all** back in school on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September!



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