

# Back to school safely

August 2020

## Dear Parents and Carers,

We are looking forward to a return to school for all pupils in our schools and colleges this September. It's been an unsettling six months for us all, and our children have needed to adjust to life without their school routine and regular contact with classmates, teachers and friends.

We know all schools are excited to have pupils back and are looking forward to learning together again.

School is the place to be for a number of reasons. Going to school is vital for your child's:

- Educational development
- Mental and physical wellbeing
- Social development
- Sense of routine

That said, we understand that this will be a worrying time, and you may be feeling anxious about the re-opening of schools and sending your children back.

We can assure you that the health and safety of children, school staff and their families is our top priority. We want to reassure you that schools in Lewisham have spent the summer holidays putting in place a number of measures to protect children, staff and families and help prevent the spread of COVID-19. We are hugely grateful to all the teachers and school staff who have worked so hard to not only keep schools open throughout the pandemic, but have put so much care and attention into preparations for welcoming everyone back to school.

Many children will have been away from the classroom for a long time and they may be nervous. Most children will adapt quickly and your school will be able to provide support to those who need more help. There is lots of **mental health support available for children and young people** if you feel you need some advice or extra help.

We have put together a list of questions and answers on the attached document that we hope will cover everything you need to know, please also **read the government guidance on returning to school**.

If you have any further questions, the first point of contact should be your school. If you haven't heard from them already, your school will be in touch soon to outline what to expect when it's time to return to school next month.

Best wishes,



**Pinaki Ghoshal**  
Executive Director for Children & Young People  
Lewisham Council



**Dr Catherine Mbema**  
Director of Public Health  
Lewisham Council