



# Highters Heath Community School

Highters Heath Lane, Kings Heath, Birmingham B14 4LY

Telephone 0121 464 2459 or 0121 464 2014

Email: [office@hightersheath.co.uk](mailto:office@hightersheath.co.uk) | Web: [www.hightersheath.co.uk](http://www.hightersheath.co.uk)

Headteacher: Mr B Doherty B.Ed (Hons) Deputy Headteacher: Mrs E Mudge Ba (Hons) PGCE

1<sup>st</sup> September 2020

## Parent Information about Safety Procedures for Covid 19

As you are hopefully aware, there is a PowerPoint document on the website (<https://www.hightersheath.co.uk/school-reopening>) which outlines our full plan regarding our safety measures, but is more about procedures for when children are back at school. This document provides you with extra information and answers to some questions you may have about the measures that we are putting in place to ensure everyone is kept safe.

On our website you can view our Covid 19 Risk Assessment which outlines all of our measures in a formal document. We've put this guide together with some detail about the key measures to provide you with some reassurance about what we have put in place.

### Beginning and end of day

Each class has been given a start and finish time for the foreseeable future. In our guidance, we said that we felt it reasonable for a parent to wait up to 10 minutes for siblings to start or finish and we will help with anything longer than 10 minutes. There are red crosses on the playground to denote parent waiting areas.

### Break Times

Classes will have staggered morning and afternoon breaks. Breaks are slightly shorter, and classes will have different times for breaks so that children are only with the children in their class.

Each class will have their own box of break time equipment so that they aren't sharing equipment with other classes. This equipment will be wiped down after each break time.

### Lunchtimes

For the first half term, packed lunches will be available for all children. Any payments need to be made into the box in the front office, but please observe social distancing when entering the office.

We have arranged lunchtimes so that children only have contact with the other children in their class.

### Cleaning

There are enhanced cleaning measures in place. This system for cleaning was in place last term and worked well.

Each classroom has its own cleaning equipment. When one member of staff takes the class out for break time, the other member of staff wipes down surfaces in the classroom where necessary.

Other areas of school are cleaned by members of staff who aren't class based. This includes shared area surfaces, door handles, photocopiers, keypads etc.

All toilets are cleaned regularly during the day.

The whole school is cleaned every afternoon/morning by our cleaning team.



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### Equipment

Each child has their own learning pack with their everyday items in such as pencil, pen, glue stick etc. This is kept on their desk. This reduces the sharing of resources between children.

Ipads and computers in the computer suite are allocated to each class to reduce sharing of devices from children in different classes. Ipads and computers are wiped down after use. No pencil cases are to be brought in from home to minimise items coming in and out of school.

### Books

Children will have an individual reading book that they bring home as normal. When they've finished this book they'll put it in a box before it's returned to the shelves with the other books. This means that any book that a child reads won't have been handled by another child for at least 72 hours to reduce cross-contamination.

### Drinks

Children should have their own water bottle in school so that they can drink water through the day. If a child forgets their water bottle we will have disposable cups for them to get a drink from, but for environmental and cost reasons we'd like to keep use of these to a minimum so please do help your child to remember their bottle each day. If you prefer them to keep their water bottle in school that is fine and it can be refilled each day.

### Organisation of Seating

Government guidance suggests that children should sit facing the front. We have planned for this in an appropriate way as it goes against our ethos of early years teaching for children to spend all their time sitting in rows at desks. In Reception children will sit facing the front on the carpet when the teacher is delivering an input and then when doing table activities their tables will be in small groups as normal.

In Year 1 and 2 children will sit facing the front on the carpet and then when doing table activities their tables will be facing the front.

In Years 3 to 6 children will sit at their tables facing the front. They won't sit on the carpet at all.

Staff will support children as they usually would when they need help with their learning in a socially distanced way. Social distancing will be very difficult in class, but we will be working to find the best practice as time goes on. This is new for all of us! Sometimes the class will have another adult teach them such as planning time, but their contact with other bubbles will be as minimal as possible.

### First Aid Procedures

If your child requires first aid treatment, this will be carried out as normal by our first aid trained staff. Staff will wear PPE including gloves and an apron to carry out first aid.



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### Speaking to the class teacher

Parents are unable to come into school at the start or end of the day so please drop your child off at their usual door where they'll be met by their teacher or teaching assistant. If you wish to speak to their teacher the best way to get in touch is to phone the office and they'll arrange for the teacher to ring you back when they're not teaching.

### Illness

Please do not bring your child to school if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus. If a child develops symptoms of Coronavirus at school we will ring parents immediately and the child will be taken to wait away from all other children until they are collected. If they can't wait alone due to their age the member of staff looking after them will wear PPE. The child should self-isolate for 7 days and fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days and apply for a test. If they test negative they can return to school and fellow household members can end their self-isolation. If they test positive, parents should inform school immediately and the rest of their group in school will be sent home and asked to self-isolate for 14 days

### Questions You May Have

As there are a number of changes to our normal procedures this term, we've put together a list of possible questions you may have and we hope that this clarifies different aspects of school.

**1. If I'm stuck in traffic and cannot get to school in time at the end of the day, what will happen?**

*If you are running late due to traffic we will take care of your child outside the office as normal, but obviously, this is not ideal as there is more of a possibility that they might come into contact with children from other bubbles.*

**2. Will school trips be able to go ahead?**

*Government guidelines states that non-residential visits can now take place. However, as a school we have made the decision not to go on any school visits in the Autumn Term due to the extra elements of risk this may add. Instead we'll be aiming to add to the children's curriculum experience with visitors linked to the topic either coming in to school to talk to the children in a socially distanced way, or talk to the children virtually.*

**3. Will there be after-school clubs?**

*We are looking to start after-school clubs in the second half the Autumn Term. We have some work to do to work out how to run these in the safest way possible, so that as many children as possible can benefit from them, but whilst maintaining our bubbles.*

**4. Can parent/child events still take place eg role model workshops?**

*At the moment we are unable to hold any events with parents due to restricting the number of people that come into school. As soon as we're safely able to we will be aiming to hold our usual range of family events.*

**5. I have children in different year groups with different drop off/ collection times. How does this work?**



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*Our staggered drop off and collection times are there to minimise the number of people on the school site at once. If you have children with different start times please refer to the guidance PowerPoint on the website, (School arrangements for reopening in September). At collection time please collect children at their designated finish time. This ensures that no learning time is lost.*

- 6. My child has asthma/hay fever/allergies and as a result sometimes has a persistent cough. Will they be sent home because of this? Will I have to provide medical evidence to stop them being sent home?**

*This is a difficult question to answer as we will consider every child's individual circumstances. We have to strictly follow the guidance about sending children home if they show any symptoms of Covid-19 but we realise that children have coughs for all kinds of reasons. We will work with families to ensure we get the balance between keeping everyone safe and not sending children home unnecessarily*

- 7. If my family have to isolate, will you be able to provide my child(children) with home learning?**

*Yes. We have a remote learning plan which will be available on our school website. Learning will be provided immediately if a child has to isolate.*

- 8. Will the children be able to cope with all the changes?**

*We are aiming to make school as normal as we possibly can. Many of the changes we have are to do with procedures which are the responsibility of adults and to the children these routines will just become the way that things happen. However, every child is different and we know that some children will just settle quickly back into the routines of school but others will find it difficult. Staff will be very aware of the pastoral needs of children and we have Mr Purcell, our Learning Mentor, who will always be available to chat to children and provide support. If your child does come home from school upset about anything please let us know and we can make sure that we support them.*

- 9. My child has friends who are in a different year group and he/she is upset about staggered breaks/lunch and not seeing their friends. Will they be able to see friends in different year groups?**

*Unfortunately we do have to follow guidance about bubbles as this underpins the national strategy for getting children back to school. For the time being children will only have breaks and lunchtimes with their own class. Once national guidance changes on this we will look to going back to our usual systems for playtimes and lunchtimes.*

- 10. What will happen if my child is late to school in the morning?**

*Being on time for school is so important and we will be following our usual procedures for when children are late. You will need to sign your child in at the office if you arrive late giving a reason for why they are late. If you have children with different start times, please refer to the guidance PowerPoint on the website, (School arrangements for reopening in September). We know that for those children who haven't been at school since March there may be difficulties initially getting back into the morning routine. Please let us know if you are having difficulties getting your child to school in a morning and we will work with you to support you with this.*

- 11. A member of our household was shielding during lockdown. Will he/she be safe when my child returns to school?**

*Below is the guidance from the DfE around shielding and returning to school*



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## **Pupils who are shielding or self-isolating**

We now know much more about coronavirus (COVID-19) and so in future there will be far fewer children and young people advised to shield whenever community transmission rates are high. Therefore, the majority of pupils will be able to return to school. You should note however that:

- a small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)
- shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. Read the [current advice on shielding](#)
- if rates of the disease rise in local areas, children (or family members) from that area, and that area only, will be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and therefore they may be temporarily absent (see below).
- some pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school (usually at their next planned clinical appointment). You can find more advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health at [COVID-19 - 'shielding' guidance for children and young people](#)

## **12. Will fire drill procedures have to change?**

*We will have a fire drill early in the new term but we may look to have several drills with a few classes each time. This minimises the chance of children coming into contact with children from other classes. Obviously in the case of a real fire the whole school would evacuate at once as the risk of fire would be far greater than the risk of mixing bubbles.*

## **13. We didn't get to go on holiday as ours was cancelled, will we get a fine if we go during term time?**

*Our usual procedures for authorising holidays will apply. Holidays will only be authorised for a very limited set of circumstances and fixed penalty notices will be issued for unauthorised holidays. Children have missed so much school it is critical that they attend well now that they are back.*

## **14. Should my child wear fresh uniform every day?**

*We expect children to wear the correct school uniform. Full details of this can be found on our website or Parent App. Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal.*

## **15. What will you put in place to help children settle in to their new class as many have missed so much time in school?**

*We were unable to do our usual transition work in the summer term so the first six days of term will be transition days. The children will be doing activities to help them get to know their new teacher and to get them used to being back in school and finding out about the routines, as well as accessing mental health and wellbeing support where needed.*

*Our Pastoral Team have already been discussing what we may need to put in place for children who are struggling being back in school and it is a high priority of ours as a school to ensure that the wellbeing of children is put first.*

## **16. What can we as parents do to help our children catch up with gaps in learning and skills?**

*We will have a new Home Learning Policy this year with a focus on practising reading, spellings and times tables. We'll send this out early in the new term. The most important*



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*thing that you can do as parents is to read with your child every day and to practise the spellings/flashcards/times tables that their teacher sends home for them.*

I hope that these questions and answers have put your mind at ease with regard to your children returning to school.

If there is anything you are not sure about, please contact us by phone or email me directly at [b.doherty@hightersheath.co.uk](mailto:b.doherty@hightersheath.co.uk)

This is going to be a very strange term with all of us getting used to new ways of teaching and learning. We have no idea how long this virus will be with us, or how long these measures will need to be in place. However, I can assure you that everything we do is absolutely about keeping your children and our staff safe while in school.

Kind regards always.

Brian Doherty  
Head Teacher