



# Highters Heath Community School

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Head Teacher Mr B Doherty B.Ed (Hons)

Deputy Head Teacher Mrs E Mudge BA (Hons) PGCE

26/02/2021

Dear Parents/Carers.

First of all, apologies for the lengthy letter, but there is a lot you need to know. Please make sure you read the whole way through, so that you are aware of what to expect when you arrive.

I am sure you are as delighted as we are to now have a clear return date to get all pupils back into school. We are very excited at the prospect of having the school back to some kind of normality, and hearing the chatter and laughter we have missed so much while most children have been asked to stay at home.

**A word of caution though. The pandemic is not over, and there are still significant risks of infection to our community with children coming back to school. The greatest danger now is adult to adult, and child to adult transmission, so we have taken account of this in our latest plan.**

Most of what we have planned for the reopening is as it was in the Autumn term, but with one or two changes. The increased cleaning and sanitizing regime, bubbles, and one-way system that were in place inside school will be the same as it was before lockdown #3.

## Start and finish times

These will be as they were for autumn term;

**Reception** 9.10-3.20

**Year 1** 9.00-3.10

**Year 2** 8.50-3.00

**Year 3** 9.10-3.20

**Year 4** 9.00-3.10

**Year 5** 8.50-3.00

**Year 6** 8.40-2.50

## Points to note

- All children will come through the main car park gate; the markings are still visible. The one-way system around the outside of school, and the red crosses for waiting areas are still there and need to be heeded.
- Please be very punctual and come just in time for your child's start (not early and not late).
- Keep 2 metres apart from everyone not in your bubble **particularly other adults**. (Public Health England have told us in the latest guidance that the new strains of Coronavirus are much more transmissible and therefore, contact must be closely monitored).
- **All adults that come onto the school premises must wear masks or face coverings**. This has been the case since the start of January. If there is a reason that you are not able to wear a face mask, please contact us so we can make alternative arrangements for your child, **please do not just turn up without one**.
- Only 1 adult to come to school for each family.
- Children should stand with their adult until they are asked to come into school (and should not be allowed to run around the playground. This is due to the risk of bubble mixing when they come into school).
- Children should wear their normal uniforms, or their PE kits on appropriate days.
- Breakfast club will operate as normal.
- We will make the same provision as we did before, for families where start times for siblings is more than 10 minutes apart.
- Staff will be wearing masks around the school to protect themselves, children and each other and will continue with our twice weekly home testing for Covid.

## **Attendance**

All pupils are expected to return to full-time on-site provision in the week commencing 8 March. Attendance is mandatory in line with the usual rules, i.e. parents have a legal duty to secure their child's regular attendance at school.

We recognise that it is very possible that some pupils and their families, may feel reluctant or anxious about returning to school following the partial closure. Although we will impress the importance of attending the school site, we will also be sensitive to these worries, particularly where staff or pupils may be at increased risk from coronavirus. We would encourage you to get in touch with the Head Teacher to talk through the health and safety measures in place at the school, if you feel that you need to. We will endeavour to accommodate any additional requirements to support the full attendance of these individuals at school where possible.

This has been an incredibly tough time for everyone, and I do believe we are now over the worst, thanks to everyone's efforts, and of course the success of the rollout of the vaccines. However, **I want to emphasise the importance of continued vigilance and care that we all need to take to ensure that this last year, is consigned to history very soon.**

I want to thank you all deeply for all the effort you have put in, to ensure your children continue to learn and thrive through these dark days, and for all the kind messages and support you have sent to myself and to all the staff. This has been a massive joint effort with everyone doing their bit, and I sincerely believe that all of this has brought us closer together as a community.

Any questions or comments, please get in touch in the usual way. Let's now keep moving forward, towards that light at the end of this very long and dark tunnel!

Kindest regards as ever,

Brian Doherty