



**REOPENING SCHOOL FOLLOWING  
COVID-19 CLOSURES  
(MARCH 2021)**

**INFORMATION  
FOR PARENTS  
AND PUPILS**

**School re-opening following COVID-19 closures**

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, I hope that you are all safe and well. I want to begin by saying that I know there will be a wide variation in thoughts and feelings about school reopening. We find ourselves in a continually evolving situation. We have been navigating this situation together for almost a year now and our approach as a school remains the same: we are here to support our families in any way we possibly can. We know there will be some anxieties around school returning and we will do all that we can to mitigate the risks, welcome pupils back and re-establish routines. However, the most recent announcements signal hope and that a return to some form of 'normality' is on the horizon.

As you are now all aware, school will be reopening to ALL pupils as of Monday the 8<sup>th</sup> of March. Our preparations are well underway in readiness to welcome the children back to school in the safest way possible. Following the government announcement and release of updated guidance on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, the Prince Albert Community Trust have been planning for the full reopening of our five schools. This process has included the updating of risk assessments, review of control measures previously in place and in-depth reviewing of guidance.

What follows in this pack is the important information for you as parents. It is being shared to give you a complete overview of:

- what school will be like for pupils,
- what is expected of you as members of our community
- what you can expect from us as a school.

**It is extremely important that we continue to work together to ensure the safety of our pupils, staff and parents on site, so I thank you in advance for your support with the measures and logistics outlined. The control measures in place depend on us all doing our bit to reduce the risk.**

The past 8 weeks of home learning have been a testament to our school and how far we have come. The positive feedback we have received has meant the world to staff and we continue to be so unbelievably proud of our pupils for their resilience, efforts and determination. We are very much looking forward to greeting you all and welcoming you back on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March.

If you have any questions about any of the content of this information pack, please do not hesitate to email us at [schoolclosure@hifield.bham.sch.uk](mailto:schoolclosure@hifield.bham.sch.uk) or to approach a member of our Senior Leadership Team on gate duty when we return.

Take good care and we look forward to seeing you very soon,

Best wishes

Mr. Knibbs, Mrs. Davies and the whole Highfield team.

### DfE Guidance on reopening school:

Published guidance states school must take action under two categories: 'prevention' and 'response to any infection'. These categories inform schools of how to reduce risk and how to 'create an inherently safer environment'.

Under the **PREVENTION** category, school will be enforcing the following:

- Minimising contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend the school.
- Ensuring we act quickly and appropriately if someone in the school community becomes unwell during the school day.
- Ensuring face coverings are worn by adults in recommended circumstances – this includes all staff and parents unless they are medically exempt.
- Ensuring everyone in the building cleans their hands thoroughly and more frequently than usual.
- Ensuring good respiratory hygiene for everyone by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
- Maintaining enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using appropriate detergents.
- Minimising contact across the site and maintaining social distancing, wherever possible.
- Keep school spaces well-ventilated.
- Engaging with twice-weekly LFD testing for adults working in school.

Under the **RESPONSE TO ANY INFECTION** category, school will:

- Promote and engage with the NHS test and trace service.
- Manage confirmed cases of Coronavirus amongst the school community, ensuring all necessary steps/actions are taken.
- Contain any outbreak by following PHE local health protection team advice.

### **Staff members, parents and carers will need to:**

- Ensure a test is booked if they, their child or a member of their household has symptoms - the main symptoms are:
  - a high temperature
  - a new continuous cough
  - a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
- Self-isolate immediately and not come to school if:
  - They develop symptoms or they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) 24
  - Anyone in their household or support or childcare bubble develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
  - They are required to do so having recently travelled from certain other countries
  - They have been advised to isolate by NHS test and trace or the PHE local health protection team, which is a legal obligation
- Provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with, if they test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace

### Calendar dates for Spring Term 2021

- **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> and Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March** – School will be closed to all pupils (including critical worker provision) to enable us to prepare the school building for reopening and complete all risk assessment training with staff. Home learning will still be set by class teachers and link to World Book Day. Live registration sessions will also continue as normal.
- **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March** – School opens to all pupils.
- **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March** – Parents Evening (specific details TBC – this is a preliminary date and subject to change dependant upon Covid restrictions)
- **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April** – Final day of term. Break up for Easter holidays.
- **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April** – Summer term begins. School reopens to all pupils.

### Procedures for dropping off and collecting children:

Year group:	Morning drop off:	Afternoon collection:	Gate to use	Friday Pick up time only
Reception	8:40am	2:55pm	Highfield Rd	12:45pm
Year 1	8:40am	2:55pm	Harts Rd	12:45pm
Year 2	8:50am	3:05pm	Harts Rd	12:50pm
Year 3	9:00am	3:15pm	Highfield Rd	1pm
Year 4	8:40am	2:55pm	Ponderosa	12:50pm
Year 5	9:00am	3:15pm	Harts Rd	12:50pm
Year 6	9:00am	3:15pm	Ponderosa	1pm
Nurture	8:50am	3:05pm	Highfield Rd	12:50pm

- We appreciate that there are parents with multiple children across multiple year groups but staggered start times are essential to reduce congestion and ensure that social distancing is as effective as it can be
- Please do not arrive before the allocated times – your child will not be able to enter school early and this will lead to unnecessary congestion/gathering on school grounds.
- One family member to collect their children only. Please ensure that older siblings from secondary schools are not coming on to the site with you.
- ***Social distancing must be maintained at all times on the school site and there can be no congregation of different households and families.***
- Senior Leaders will be on gate duty every day to ensure the safety of our school community. Staff will also be on duty on playgrounds and across the school site to ensure social distancing and the swift drop-off/collection of pupils.
- Children are not permitted to wear face coverings one on the school site. We ask that parents continue to wear face coverings whilst on our school site (unless medically exempt).

### Social distancing and bubbles within school:

You are all familiar with the 'bubble' system now as it was used in school throughout the Autumn term. Classes being treated as a single 'bubble' minimises the number of individuals that pupils and staff are exposed to.

In their bubble, pupils will learn together in the classroom, play together outside and access lunchtime provision together too. As much as possible, the school adults in the bubble will also remain consistent.

Maintaining distinct groups or 'bubbles' that do not mix makes it quicker and easier in the event of a positive case to identify those who may need to self-isolate and also assists in keeping the number of affected people to a minimum.

Under the robust risk assessment in place, every possible measure has been taken to reduce the opportunity for bubbles to mix.

### *For example:*

- During lunchtime 4 class bubbles will be out on the playground at the same time but they will be in separate coned off areas of this space and have separate adults to support them.
- 2 bubbles will have PE at the same time but this will be in separate areas of the school playground

### Friday club:

Friday club will continue but will again operate in bubbles. All children who were previously entitled to this provision will still be able to attend.

If you require a place for your child, please check the criteria and if you meet it, please email [enquiry@hifield.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@hifield.bham.sch.uk) to ensure their name is added to the register for this provision.

### Social distancing within the classroom:

**SOCIAL DISTANCING**

**PLEASE FOLLOW THIS ADVICE:**



**KEEP YOURSELF  
2 METRES AWAY FROM  
OTHERS WHERE POSSIBLE.**



**RESPECT THE PERSONAL  
SPACE OF OTHERS.**



**LIMIT TOUCH WHERE YOU  
CAN AND WASH HANDS  
REGULARLY.**



Current DfE guidance accepts and acknowledges that social distancing in a class size of up to 30 children is not possible.

Instead, children will be encouraged to keep their distance from each other wherever possible e.g. when playing outside, walking in their house corridor or using the bathroom facilities. All pupils will be reminded about social distancing in their first days back and posters are displayed all around school to remind them of this.

Whilst seated in the classroom, pupils will sit next to each other (with the tables in rows and all pupils facing the front.) To avoid being directly opposite others, pupils will not sit in usual group table arrangements. This is the same approach as used in the Autumn term so pupils are used to this.

### Break times:

To further limit the opportunities for bubbles to mix, break times will take place at different times to ensure that only one year group is out at a time. Class bubbles will again be in place, with each one having their own area of the playground. (Reception children will continue to have access outdoors for their outdoor learning).

Please continue to send a **healthy snack** in with your child each day for their breaktime if you wish to do so (for example, a piece of fruit or a cereal bar). Crisps and chocolate bars should not be sent into school.

Classes will be encouraged to take additional physical activity/outside breaks to support children in transitioning back to the full school day and increasing their learning stamina following long periods at home.

## Lunchtime Arrangements:

### *School dinners:*

- Our daily hot school meal offer will continue.
- Children in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 who access the universal free meal, along with children who are free-school meal eligible from across school, will receive a hot school dinner each day.

### *Packed lunches:*

- If you prefer, a packed lunch can be provided each day.
- It should also contain a healthy selection of food from across the food groups.
- Lunchboxes should be clearly named. We continue to ask for plastic reusable lunchboxes, instead of fabric ones please, as these are easier to clean/anti-bac daily.

### *Home dinners:*

- Other than on Fridays, home dinners will remain on hold. They will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances that have been shared with a member of SLT.

### *One hour lunch period:*

- Regardless of whether your child is a hot school dinner or a packed lunch, they will be eating in the hall and will be accompanied by the other children in their bubble. Each bubble has their own designated area within the hall
- They will also have an assigned member of staff to supervise them during lunchtime – this person will remain consistent to reduce contact with multiple staff members across a week.
- They will have a period of time outside and a 30 minute period inside for eating their lunch.
- A robust cleaning schedule is in place to ensure that this dining area is cleaned with anti-bacterial spray after use by each bubble.

### *Is there anything else children should bring?*

- A named water bottle should come with your child to school each day and can be accessed at any time throughout the day, including during learning time.
- This should contain water only (no squash or flavoured water)
- It will come home each evening to be washed thoroughly ahead of the next day.

**Cleaning and Hygiene Procedures:**

All classrooms will continue to have access to cleaning materials which will be used throughout the day to wipe down surfaces, door handles and other touch points.  
 To prevent possible spread, an enhanced cleaning schedule from our external providers and PACT site team is also in place (including additional cleaning of bathroom facilities during the school day and regular cleaning of touch points such as internal and external doors)

**Hand washing and Hand Sanitiser:**



Hand washing remains a vital part of the fight against Covid-19 spreading and is an essential cog in the school risk assessment measures.

- Pupils will be given hand sanitiser on entry to school each morning and asked to rub this in before making contact with any school property/doors.
- They will continue to wash hands regularly and correct hand washing will be taught on their return to school.
- Hand wash and paper towels are available in all bathrooms and classrooms.
- Hand gel will also be used at regular intervals throughout the school day (this contains minimum 70% alcohol in line with WHO/NHS advice)
- Handwashing posters are on display in classrooms and bathrooms to remind children of how to wash their hands properly.

## Good Respiratory

The 'Catch it, bin it, kill it' approach also continues to be very important:

- All classrooms have supplies of tissues for children to access.
- All classrooms and learning spaces also have lidded bins for used tissues to be disposed of safely.
- Pupils will be re-taught the 'Catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
- Where needed, younger pupils will be supported to understand and follow this guidance.
- Supportive posters are displayed all around school to remind children of this important rule.

## Hygiene:



## What can and can't come into school?

In September, we asked for a minimal number of items to be brought in to school each day to minimise the risk. We know that the virus can be spread via touchpoints and surfaces.

Item:	Can this come into school?	Further detail:
Water bottle	YES	All children need a named water bottle in school each day. This will come home for washing each evening.
Plastic lunch box	YES	This should be taken home each day for washing/anti-bac spraying.
Coats	YES	Cloakrooms will be accessible to pupils. Hats, scarves and gloves should also be sent in on days where it is particularly cold.
Home readers	YES	They will be sent home and need to be returned in a plastic wallet. All books will be quarantined for 72 hours.
Items from home e.g. toys, holiday souvenirs	NO	These should not be brought into school as they could get lost or damaged. Classrooms and workspaces must be kept clutter free to allow for regular cleaning throughout the school day.
Pencil cases and personal stationery items	NO	All pupils have their own A4 zipper wallet containing all of the items they need for learning. These will be for their use only and not shared with others. Please do not send in any stationery items from home.

PE Kits in drawstring bags/ rucksacks	NO	As during the Autumn term, pupils should come to school in their PE kit on their PE day each week to prevent the need for changing. (See below for more info)
Sweets for birthday celebrations	YES	However, they must be individually wrapped e.g. treat-size chocolate bars or mini bags such as haribo

### School Uniform:

All children need to wear school uniform on returning to school. The compulsory uniform for Highfield:

- Highfield Primary sweatshirt/cardigan
- White polo shirt
- Grey trousers/skirt/pinafore
- Grey tights/socks
- Black school shoes (NO TRAINERS)

For PE, the compulsory uniform is:

- White sports t-shirt/polo shirt
- Black shorts or jogging bottoms
- Black PE pumps/trainers for outdoors
- Plain black tracksuits can also be worn due to children wearing their PE kits all day.

You can find further information about how to order school uniform on our website.

The ventilation of school is an important part of the risk assessment.  
**Windows and doors must be kept open, regardless of the weather conditions.**  
 Please ensure your child wears appropriate layers on colder days.

### Parent Code of Conduct for SPRING TERM 2021 – following school closures for Covid-19

#### INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS – COMMUNICATING WITH SCHOOL AND EXPECTATIONS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS:

- We have to minimise the number of people on school grounds and reduce the opportunities for different classes/children to encounter each other.
- We expect all adults to adhere to current social distancing guidance at all times.
- The main school office is CLOSED to all parents.
- School is contactable via enquiry@hifield.bham.sch.uk
- Please drop off and collect your child at the allocated time via their allocated gate
- Please ensure you are prompt and on time in both dropping off and collecting your child each day.
- We ask that ONE family member drops off and collects please to avoid unnecessary gathering/congestion.
- Please wear a face covering at all times whilst on our school site (unless medically exempt).

#### PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD INTO SCHOOL IF THEY, OR ANYONE LIVING IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD, IS DISPLAYING ANY SYMPTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH COVID-19

- *High temperature*
- *New and persistent cough*

#### YOU DO NOT NEED TO PROVIDE ANY HANDWASHING PRODUCTS

- All groups will have access to hand soap and warm water.
- All classrooms have bottles of hand sanitizer which the children will be asked to use at regular intervals throughout the day. This

- *Loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste/smell.*
- *Please self-isolate for 10 days and inform school of this by calling and following our normal absence procedures.*
- *Please be very clear if you leave a voicemail message about whether your child has symptoms or not.*
- *If your child needs to be tested, please communicate this with school and inform us of results as soon as you receive them*

contains minimum 70% ethanol (in line with WHO advice)

#### **SPEAKING TO STAFF MEMBERS**

- Senior Leaders will continue to be on gate duty each morning to answer any queries you may have.
- Face-to-face contact with teachers is not possible – telephone appointments can be made via the school office

### **WE UNDERSTAND THAT YOU, AND YOUR CHILD, MAY BE FEELING ANXIOUS ABOUT THE RETURN TO SCHOOL.**

- We will do all that we can to support them emotionally with the differences they will notice in school at this time. Pupil mental health and wellbeing remains a number one priority for us.
- All routines, procedures and protocols have been put into place to minimise the ongoing risk posed by COVID-19

***WE THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND CO-OPERATION***

#### **Attendance to School:**

Attendance to school is mandatory. The government have been very clear in their expectation that **ALL** pupils of primary school age will return to school on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. Mr Azad and Mr. Farooq, our Pastoral Leaders, will continue to monitor attendance closely in the usual way. Any pupils who are absent will receive phone calls home to establish why they are not in school.

The guidance states: **School attendance will be mandatory for all pupils from 8<sup>th</sup> March.**

This means the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- *parent's duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil and they are of compulsory school age;*
- *schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence*
- *the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' code of conduct*

Clinically extremely vulnerable pupils: School will need a letter from a health professional to be able to authorise absence for shielding. Any child at home for this reason will be expected to engage in home learning.

If your child is absent due to isolating for 10 days because a member of the household has tested positive, they will also be expected to engage with home learning.

**Home learning:**

In the event of a whole bubble closing and having to self-isolate, pupils will be expected to engage with home learning. All pupils now have the relevant log-in details needed for this (MS Teams) and school have a small number of devices (iPads) available to loan to those isolating who need them. Paper packs may also be used.

For individuals who are self-isolating, paper packs may be used alongside material from Oak National and other government approved websites and resources. Pupils who are absent due to self-isolation must regularly submit their work to their teacher for feedback and to ensure understanding.

**If your child becomes unwell during their time at school:**

It is essential that school have up-to-date contact information for every pupil we care for at all times. However, in the current situation, this has even greater importance.

We hope that this won't happen but clear procedures are in place should any child become ill or begin displaying Covid-19 symptoms whilst in school:

- Pupil will be removed from their bubble classroom and placed in a designated first aid room in school.
- They will be supervised by a trained first aider.
- Parents will be called and asked to immediately collect the child.
- You will be asked to engage with NHS testing to establish whether your child does have Coronavirus.
- If they test positive, then all children within their bubble and all staff who have been in close contact with them, will be sent home to self-isolate in line with government guidance.

**Close contact** is defined as:

- Anyone who lives in the same household as someone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Anyone who has had any of the following types of contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) with a PCR or LFD test:

- Face-to-face contact including being coughed on or having a face-to-face conversation within 1 metre
- Been within 1 metre for 1 minute or longer without face-to-face contact
- Been within 2 metres of someone for more than 15 minutes (either as a one-off contact, or added up together over one day)
- Travelled in the same vehicle.

**Communication between home and school is absolutely vital in these circumstances. We must work together; acting quickly and efficiently to protect all school community members affected.**

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### Extra-Curricular Activities and Breakfast Club

#### **Breakfast Club:**

Breakfast Club will resume from the 8<sup>th</sup> of March – this will be in year group or household bubbles.

Breakfast Club will be pre-booked in the usual way and paid for via SchoolMoney.

The cost for Breakfast Club is £1 per day.

#### **Afterschool Clubs:**

At Highfield, we pride ourselves on offering extra-curricular options for our pupils after school. However, in current circumstances, our first priority is to get all children into school for their normal school day, ensuring maximum safety and wellbeing for all. Once these routines and practices are re-embedded, we will look to widen our opening hours and offer after school clubs for pupils if possible.

#### **Information Sharing**

We have created a brief form for you to complete about returning to school. The link is below:

<https://is.gd/MarchreturnHiF>

## Reporting an Absence during Covid 19

### Reporting an Absence

We are planning to welcome all children back to school on the 8th of March 2021, following the guidance set out by the Government. This means all students are expected to return to school and access their right to a fulltime education. When your child returns to school on Monday 8th of March 2021 but you find that your child is going to be absent due to illness or an appointment, you must:

- Phone the school absence line on **0121 647 1708** between 8:00AM- 8:30AM each day with an explanation of your child's absence.
- For any medical appointment, you must provide medical evidence such a letter, appointment card or any other evidence you have as per School Attendance Policy. Wherever possible, non-urgent appointments need to be made outside of school time.
- If your child or a person in your bubble is displaying symptoms of Coronavirus, you must all self-isolate and book a test. You must share the result with school as soon as possible via: [enquiry@hifield.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@hifield.bham.sch.uk) or telephone on **0121 647 1708**. If this is a positive test, you are required by law to self-isolate for **10 days**. The people you live with must self-isolate for **10 days** and you must inform school immediately.

This is in order to maintain accurate attendance records and ensure the health and safety of all our students and staff.

Many thanks for your support with this.

Best wishes,

Mr. A Knibbs  
Head of School

# School Attendance – Covid Update March 2021

## *A very important message for all parents/carers*

March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

This is a message about school attendance.

Highfield Junior and Infant School is working in partnership with parents and Birmingham City Council to encourage children back into school following several very difficult months for parents and schools. We would like to thank parents for the work you have done in ensuring your children have received education during this period.

In December, when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, the government made it clear that no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school. Schools were then closed to all but a specific group of pupils; those of key workers and vulnerable children.

Now the circumstances have changed, it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise, as far as possible, the longer-term impact of the pandemic on their education, wellbeing and wider development. We know that children have missed being with their friends and the wider social aspects of school.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. **School attendance is therefore compulsory again from the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2021.**

This means from March 2021, the usual rules on school attendance apply, including:

- Parents' duty to send their child to school regularly where they are of compulsory school age;
- School's responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- **the availability of local authorities to use legal sanctions, including penalty notices and prosecution in court.**

If you are worried about your child attending school, the first port of call is to discuss your concerns with the school directly. The school has specialist staff who may be able to help, and all schools work closely with health and council teams who may also be able to help if needed.



*In addition, this is not the time to take your child out of school for a family holiday or other term time leave. It is unlikely that any leave will be authorised by the Head Teacher after so much enforced absence from school. The more your child is in school, the better it will be for them.*

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members.

No school or local authority wants to take legal action, and every attempt to resolve parent's concerns and improve a child's attendance will be made before any formal action is considered.

After so much disruption to your child/ren's education over recent months, the most important thing is that the school and parents work together to get children back into school. The school is ready to listen so please contact them if you have any worries, and they will try to help you.

We wish you and your child all the best for the coming academic year.

Kind regards

Education Legal Intervention Team  
Birmingham City Council