

HOWBRIDGE CHURCH OF ENGLAND JUNIOR SCHOOL

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Headteacher Mrs L Dale B.Ed (Hons)



March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE FULL OPENING OF SCHOOL - WEEK OF 8TH MARCH

As you are aware, the Government have decided that it is safe for all pupils to return to school on Monday 8th March. We have been through the new guidance and have decided that the majority of measures put in place during the autumn term, can continue.

In order for you to prepare your children and support a smooth transition back into school for the majority, we would ask that you read the following information very carefully.

Start Days

All pupils must attend from Monday 8th March. They will be in the same year group bubbles as previously.

Attendance

ALL children **MUST** attend every day. We continue to take extensive measures to ensure school is as safe as possible for all pupils and staff. If you have very specific concerns about your child attending because they are shielding, please communicate these to us as soon as possible.

We have to go back to recording attendance and non-attendance as pre-lockdown. Non-attendance will be followed up and we will be working with Essex County Council and other agencies to ensure attendance is as high as possible across the school.

Do I need to phone school to let you know if my child won't be in?

Yes.

You need to keep your child at home, if:

- they are not well enough to attend e.g. a sickness bug or they have symptoms of the Coronavirus (see below)

If we are expecting your child in school and you cannot send them, you **must** phone the office and either leave a message **CLEARLY STATING THE REASON** or speak to a member of the office team.

Engage with the Test and Trace Process

Staff and parents are being instructed to engage with the Test and Trace process. If anyone in your household is displaying symptoms, you should be ready to:

- Book a test (all children can be tested with help)
- Not send your child into school if they have symptoms themselves (they will be sent home if they develop symptoms at school)
- Provide details of anyone you or they have been in close contact with to the NHS
- Self-isolate. If a test is positive follow the 'stay at home' guidance below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Should the children wear school uniform?

Yes. ALL pupils will be expected to attend in full school uniform. The latest guidance for schools, states that uniform does not need to be washed any more often than pre-lockdown.

However, we would like the children to come into school on the days they have PE IN THEIR PE KIT, including trainers. If your child has one PE top and it needs washing in between lessons, they can wear a white polo shirt instead.

This will be reviewed during the autumn term.

Will the children be able to bring items such as a lunch box into school?

Yes. The latest guidance states that children can bring items in from home but that they need to be kept at a minimum.

We **are allowing** the following:

- Lunch box
- Coat
- Bag
- Water bottle **NOTE** these need to be filled with water at home and taken to and from school each day and thoroughly cleaned – NOT left on the premises.

We **ARE NOT** allowing:

- Mobile phones
- Pencil cases

Will there be wrap-around care provided?

Yes. We are able to open HOOSH from September both to existing families registered and new families from across the school.

HOOSH will continue to operate according to a detailed risk assessment and with strict guidelines in place in order to maintain a safe environment.

What will the lunch time arrangements be?

The catering team will also be operating in accordance with a detailed risk assessment and in liaison with Essex County Council. They will be providing hot and cold meals. Children may also bring a packed lunch. Lunches need to be booked online by Sunday 7th March.

Where do I drop them off and collect them?

NOTE – face coverings MUST be worn when on the patio and if you need to speak to someone in the office.

Children should not come to school or go home unaccompanied if at all possible. A responsible adult should accompany your child to ensure social distancing and other preventative measures are adhered to.

Drop-off

All year groups can come into school between 8.30am and 8.55am. They will all come onto the patio and the gates will be open from 8.30am to allow the children to leave you and walk to their classrooms. This means no one should be stood on the patio at any point in the morning. Please do not arrive before 8.30am.

Pick-up

Year 3 will come out of school at 3.00pm – this is slightly different to the autumn term.

Year 4 will come out of school at 3.05pm.

Year 5 will come out of school at 3.15pm

Year 6 will come out of school at 3.20pm.

All year groups will come into school and leave from their usual gates.

This means children and adults will need to vacate the patio as quickly as possible. It also means that there is the minimum amount of time for people to have to wait for siblings.

Will Google Classroom continue?

Yes. We will be using Google Classroom as part of our wider curriculum offer from September. This means that there will be homework tasks set using this platform (rather than being recorded in books). In addition, if pupils are self-isolating due to COVID-19 or should the school be forced to close due to a local lockdown being imposed by the Government, this is where we will continue to provide teaching and learning.

Returning Laptops

Please ensure that, if you received a laptop from school, you return it to school anytime between Mon 8th – Fri 12th March. This will help us ensure we are able to maintain social distancing in the office. It is important that all devices are returned so that, if in the event of a bubble closing and a group of children being asked to self-isolate, we are able to provide devices for them if needed.

Transition and Wellbeing – for children and adults

We know that for some children, coming back into school next week, will be an anxious or worrying time. I am writing to our children separately to reassure them and would be very grateful if you could talk to them about the things mentioned in that letter. The teachers are also preparing them this week via Google Classroom and will be carrying out activities to support all children over the next few weeks in class.

In addition, for pupils that need additional support, Mrs Rae-Shearing and Mrs Alger will be putting a range of things in place.

Please follow the link below if you feel you want to support your child with specific worries around returning:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/supporting-a-child-returning-to-school-after-lockdown/>

Essex County Council have also produced some helpful advice and information to support your emotional wellbeing and mental health. You can watch two short webinars on 'Looking After Yourself' and 'Looking After Your Family' by clicking on the links below:

[Looking after yourself](#)

[Looking after your family](#)

Thank you once again for your patience and understanding during this extraordinary and challenging time for us all.

We are **really** looking forward to welcoming all of our children back and hope they are as excited to be returning!

Yours sincerely,

Mrs L Dale
Headteacher

