



Lower Heath

Lower Heath C of E Primary School and Nursery
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Executive Headteacher: Deborah Sadler MEd, NPQH

Friday 3rd July

Re. Returning to school in September

Dear Parents

Yesterday we received guidance from the government, outlining their expectations for schools for the new academic year. Below I have outlined what this means for the children and parents in our school community.

Attendance

Pupils are expected to be back in school, full time. The government have stipulated that attendance is mandatory. Please do contact us before the summer holidays if you have any specific circumstances which may prevent your child from returning to school as expected. **Our children return to school on Wednesday 2nd September.**

Virus control

The government have outlined a system of controls that should be in place, and we already have these in place at our school. These include regular handwashing, encouraging good respiratory hygiene, enhanced cleaning, and minimising contact between groups of children. As part of our systems of control, pupils will have their own pens and pencils for their own use, but some classroom resources, such as books, will be shared within the class and cleaned frequently. Any equipment used by multiple groups (such as sports equipment) will be cleaned thoroughly between use.

Bubble system

We will still have a 'bubble system' in operation. A 'bubble' is a group of children which has limited contact with other groups. In our school, each class will form a bubble. Within the bubble, children should try to maintain a distance from each other, and particularly from staff, but this is not always possible, especially with younger children. Children should be seated side by side and facing forward, rather than gathered around desks in groups, so our classrooms will be re-organised to facilitate this. Children will stay in bubbles throughout the school day, and large gatherings will not be permitted, so whole school assemblies will not take place initially. Teachers and teaching assistants will try to remain with one bubble, but are permitted to teach in other groups if needed. We will operate staggered breaks and lunchtimes to minimize contact between bubbles.

Breakfast Club and After-School Club (Activity Zone)

These clubs will resume in September. Children from different bubbles are allowed to mix with each other to allow these clubs to open. However, for virus control, we would like to keep these groups as small and consistent as possible, so would appreciate parents only using these facilities when they absolutely need to. We would also request that parents are cautious if they use multiple providers for after-school care, as this can increase the risk of infection spreading between settings.

Our additional rota of after-school clubs will also resume in September too, and information about what is available will be sent home at the start of the new term.

Staggered timings for the start and end of the school day

In order to limit contact between bubbles, and to prevent groups of parents gathering at the school gate, we will operate staggered drop-off and pick-up times. We also request that parents use the car-park system for drop-off and pick-up, to avoid unnecessary contact with each other and with staff at the gate. Parents will not be able to come onto the school site and will only be able to enter the building if an appointment has been made.

These staggered times are as follows:

Hummingbirds (Nursery): Arrive between 8:35am and 8:40am and collect between 2:45am and 3pm – using the nursery entrance.

Robin Class (Reception and Year 1): Arrive between 8:45am and 8:55am and collect between 3:05am and 3:15pm

Skylark Class (Year 2): Arrive between 8:45am and 8:55am and collect between 3:05am and 3:15pm

Kingfisher Class (Years 3 and 4): Arrive between 8:55am and 9:05am and collect between 3:15pm and 3:25pm

Owl Class (Years 5 and 6): Arrive between 9:05am and 9:15am and collect between 3:25pm and 3:35pm

Please adhere to these times to enable us to keep each bubble separate as much as possible, and to avoid long queues in the car park.

If you have children in more than one year group, please try to drop off and pick up during the slot that applies to your OLDEST child.

Uniform and equipment

Children should continue to limit what they bring into school. Children should bring their book bag (school book bags only – no backpacks), containing their reading book and reading log, and a pencil case (in Owl Class only – younger pupils will be provided with equipment and do not need pencil cases). They will need a PE kit on their PE days (you will be informed of these at the start of the new term), and a pair of trainers every day (for the Daily 15). PE kit includes black shorts/tracksuit bottoms/leggings, and a plain white t-shirt. Children will sometimes need forest school kit (again, you will be notified if/when this is needed).

Children should wear school uniform, which includes black shoes (not trainers), grey skirt/trousers/dress, a white polo shirt and a school-branded sweater/cardigan. School sweaters and cardigans can be ordered from the school office, and they will be delivered to the office for you to collect when they arrive. We will understand if children do not have their sweaters/cardigans at the very start of the term. If any families have difficulty purchasing the required uniform, please contact us and we will do our best to support.

Lunches

Children who bring in a packed lunch should bring this in disposable packaging wherever possible. School meals will also be available to order; there may be a slightly limited menu initially, and we hope to communicate menu options before the end of this term.

The school curriculum

We will be resuming a full curriculum as far as possible, but the government guidance is that full subject coverage should resume by Summer 2021 – therefore, in order to address any gaps in children’s learning, we may not cover some subjects as often as we usually would when children first return to school. All children will complete a range of assessments and activities, as soon as they are settled back into school, so that we can identify the gaps in their knowledge and work to address these.

Reception children starting school

Children starting in Reception have not had the opportunity to experience the usual transition days, and have not spent as much time in nursery as they usually would prior to starting school. Therefore, reception children are welcome to attend school for mornings only for the first week and a half of term, and they can be collected at 12:15pm each day. So, from Monday 14th September we would expect reception children to start attending for full days.

Further information to support children moving into reception, and to answer new parents’ queries, will be sent to parents by email next week.

Parents’ responsibilities

It goes without saying that children must not come in to school if they have any symptoms of Covid 19, including a cough, a high temperature or a loss of taste/smell. If children start to display symptoms in school, they will need to be collected immediately.

The current school year ends on Friday 17th July, and school will be closed throughout the summer holidays. Should you have any queries or concerns about any of the above arrangements, please do not hesitate to contact us prior to the start of the summer holidays, so we can offer support and reassurance.

End of year reports will be sent home on Wednesday 15th July. For children who are not in school, these will be sent home by email, but parents are welcome to request a paper copy from the office. Given the current circumstances and the lack of formal assessments this year, the report format will be similar to our mid-year reports, and less detailed than our usual end of year reports. However, as we assess the children in the new term, we will keep you updated about their progress and areas for development.

Best wishes

Deborah Sadler

Headteacher