



Full opening of School on Monday March 8th



Dear Parents and Carers,

We are really looking forward to welcoming all the children into school next week and we have been busy getting everything ready and organised for March 8th.

We can't say thank you enough for the amazing job you have done at home supporting your children with their learning. We know it has been tough and exhausting at times and we really are grateful for your help and support in keeping your children learning. It's now time for you all to have a well earned rest from homeschooling.

The rest of this letter is very much information to reassure you that we will do everything we can to make the transition back to school go smoothly and to explain all the measures we have put in place at school to keep everyone safe in our school community. I appreciate it's quite a lot of information to take in but please do take the time to read it all. I'll send home paper copies too so that you have it all to hand as I know messages can be difficult to find on Class Dojo.

To continue to manage the risks, we have the following protective measures in school:

Prevention - Keep Coronavirus out of Hexham First School! No adult or child should enter school if :

- they are showing one or more [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#)
- someone in their household is showing symptoms
- someone in their support bubble has symptoms and they have been in close contact with them since the symptoms started or during the 48 hours before they started
- they or someone in their household has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
- they are required to [quarantine having recently visited a red list travel ban country](#)

An extra plea to all our families from all of us - please keep us all safe by sticking to all the Government Covid guidelines

Cleaning hands thoroughly and more often than usual

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an easy virus to kill when it is on skin. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser. Children will be asked to clean their hands regularly
 - when they arrive and leave school
 - when they return from breaks
 - before and after eating

Encouraging good respiratory hygiene 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach. We have stocks of tissues and bins are available to support children and staff to follow this routine.



Enhanced cleaning - twice daily cleaning of all frequently touched surfaces and toilets and we have a brand new advanced fogging machine that will be used to sanitise rooms and surfaces for protection against the spread of COVID-19.

Face coverings - all staff wear face coverings when moving around school and parents (unless medically exempt) wear face coverings at drop off and pick up to protect against the spread of COVID-19.

Minimise contact between bubbles and maintain social distancing where possible

- Key Stage bubbles of children will be kept apart during the school day and older children will be encouraged to maintain social distancing. Shared spaces like the library and hall will be cleaned more frequently.
- Staggered start, break, lunch and finish times to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave.

Drop off and pick up

	Drop off time	Pick up time	Location
EYFS	8:45 - 8:50 am	3:05pm	EYFS Yard
KS1	8:45 - 8:50 am	3:05pm	KS 2 Yard
KS2	8:55 am	3:15pm	KS2 Yard

To minimise congestion, please use the allocated yards and time for specific year groups and make sure there is **only one adult** on site per family to reduce the numbers in the playground. Please follow the yellow arrows and keep to our one way system.

KS1 children will now line up on the big yard in the morning by their Year group painted number on the ground. Please stay in the yard to supervise your child until their teacher arrives. (If you have a child in KS1 and KS2, the older child should remain next to you behind the perimeter line near the fence until the younger children have gone inside). If your child is late, please bring them to the school office but please try and avoid being late as not only does your child miss out on the essential morning routines and learning, it also means a member of staff has to escort them safely through the school.

Carpark

The school car park gates will be closed between 8:45am and 3:30pm so that children and parents can walk safely around the school site.

Ventilation - Good ventilation reduces the concentration of the virus in the air, which reduces the risk from airborne transmission. *This happens when people breathe in small particles (aerosols) in the air after someone with the virus has occupied an enclosed area.* Windows will be open in every classroom and communal areas and internal doors are kept open creating a throughput of air. (Remember the second layer of clothing to keep them warm)

Asymptomatic staff testing - School staff are taking part in the twice weekly asymptomatic testing programme to help reduce transmission of the virus and keep everyone safe. We are still waiting for more information about test kits for families.

What your child needs to bring into school

Children will be asked to limit what they bring into school to essential items - all they need is themselves in full **named** uniform with a book bag (a small plain Rucksack in Year 4 only as we don't have the space for anything big and bulky), a lunch box if they are having a packed lunch, a **named** water bottle and coat. **Please frisk them for fidget toys and teddies from home before they leave the house.** Just like the Autumn term, children in Year 1,2,3 and 4 will be provided with their own pencil case to limit the sharing resources.

Please could you send all the completed and uncompleted home learning along with any loaned IT equipment and chargers into school in a named carrier bag. We will then quarantine the items for 72 hours.

Classroom layout

In Year 2,3 and 4 the desks in the classrooms are forward facing and the children sit side by side where possible. Any unnecessary furniture has been removed to create maximum space.

School Meal Arrangements

The kitchen is fully open and Mrs Stokoe's delicious meals will be available as normal. Please remember to preorder your children's lunch at home through Live kitchen.

Breakfast and After School Club

The breakfast and after school club is open from 8am until 5:30pm. Please contact Michelle Ackaland if your child needs a place. Children are on socially distanced mats and numbers limited to 15.

Attendance

Just like the Autumn term, attendance is mandatory for all children from March 8th. Brilliantly, the school had the highest attendance on record in the Autumn term and we are aiming to better that.

Appointments

Please try your very best to enter the school building unless you have a pre-arranged meeting. If you need to speak to the office or your child's class teacher please ring or email the school office. (Dojo messenger will move to sharing information about reading only)Mrs Burke or Mrs Maitland can pass on any messages or arrange a telephone appointment if required. Please use online payment systems where possible.

What happens if a child is unwell?

If your child becomes ill while at school with suspected coronavirus symptoms you will be contacted to collect your child. You will need to arrange for your child to be tested and you must inform the school of the result. If the test is positive you will be required to follow the public health guidance for your child to self isolate at home for 10 days from the start of symptoms. School will notify the local health

protection team of any positive cases and action will be taken to identify those in close contact and determine what further action is needed. This could include sending people home to self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive.

If you have managed to get to the bottom of the letter without drifting off then well done - I did warn you it would be a long letter...

One final really important message to share - The Hexham staff team are fantastic and we will be working especially hard to ensure that all of our children feel happy, safe and secure back in school. Our focus will be on moving forward with positive attitudes, creating opportunities for your children to shine, helping them build friendships and resilience and giving them all the chance to once again learn and play together.

If you have any further questions please contact us and we will do our very best to help.

My very best wishes

Mrs Overton