



Hillcross Primary School

## Parental guidance with regard to the safety measures and subsequent revised operational procedures in place from September 2020 in order to keep the school community safe during the COVID-19 pandemic

We have received guidance from the DfE in regard to the Government's expectation that all children and young people, in all year groups, will return to school full time from the beginning of the autumn term 2020.

The prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) has decreased since schools and colleges restricted their opening to most pupils in March, the NHS Test and Trace system is up and running and we understand more about the measures that need to be in place to create safer environments in schools. As a result, the government has asked schools and colleges to plan for all children and young people to return from the start of the new academic year.

The scientific evidence shows that coronavirus (COVID-19) presents a much lower risk to children than adults of becoming severely ill, and there is no evidence that children transmit the disease any more than adults. Of course, there will still be risks while coronavirus (COVID-19) remains in the community, and that is why we have a robust plan to put in place a range of protective measures in September when the school re-opens for everyone.

In order to effectively manage the risks that remain, some things will be quite different when we return to school for the new academic year. This guidance for parents sets out some of the protective measures the government is asking all schools and colleges to put in place, how this impacts on the operational procedures of the school and what parents, carers and children will need to do in order to help us make Hillcross as safe as possible for everyone.

It is vital that all children return to school in September - for their educational progress, for their wellbeing, and for their wider development. If you have concerns about your child returning to school or college, because you consider they may have other risk factors, you should call the school or email [info@hillcross.merton.sch.uk](mailto:info@hillcross.merton.sch.uk) as soon as possible to discuss this with us so that we can further explain the existing measures we are putting in place to reduce risks in line with government guidance, and so that we can ascertain if there are any other potential reasonable adjustments that could be made.

### **How everyone can help make schools and colleges as safe as possible**

We have carried out a comprehensive health and safety risk assessment as part of our planning for the Autumn Term and the return of all pupils. Upholding these procedures is a collective responsibility of staff, parents and children – please support the leadership team to ensure everyone's safety by implementing these approaches at all times.

Never before have schools been in such a position and now, as we approach a full-reopening of the school to all year groups, it is more important than ever that all parents and families continue to fully support and actively engage with *all* systems and procedures in place (even those that are inconvenient and time-consuming). Every action we take as a school is done so in order to keep your child, other children, parents and staff safe during this time. Ask such, we ask that you carefully read the information below, and all future communications including parentmails, so that we can all work collaboratively in taking responsibility for the safety of our school community.

This document is intended as a reference guide to support families to familiarize themselves with the safety measures and the subsequently revised procedures that we will all need to follow from September. This comprehensive document should answer any questions you may have, but please email [info@hillcross.merton.sch.uk](mailto:info@hillcross.merton.sch.uk) if you have any further queries. This will be checked in the last week of the summer holidays and we will compile a 'frequently asked questions' document to address these that will be sent to all families before our return in September. Please note, WhatsApp groups are not always a reliable source of information in regards to school procedures. To avoid confusion, only refer to documents published by the school when seeking clarification about a safety measure or revised routines.

When reading this guide, it will be important to acknowledge that there is not a one size fits all approach to the re-opening of schools. You may be aware of other schools who are doing things differently, or have a personal preference for or belief in an alternative course of action, but please be assured that school leaders and governors have a very clear understanding of the unique circumstances and needs of our school and community and have made carefully considered and informed judgments about how to balance delivering a broad and balanced curriculum with the measures needed to manage the risk associated that are relevant to Hillcross.

**It is important to note this this document will continuously be adapted and reviewed in response to the latest guidance from the government and as the school community navigates their way through new operational systems and ways of working.**

As usual, we will communicate via email any changes that directly impact families, but you will be able to find the latest version (blue text is new and changed information) on the coronavirus page of our school website. Here, you will also find help and guidance to all things coronavirus.

For the latest government guidance for schools, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19>



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## **1. Strategies in place to prevent the spread of coronavirus in school:**

- a) Grouping of children
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- d) Washing Hands Regularly
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- f) Before and after school clubs
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- i) Lunch and break-times
- j) Classroom set-up
- k) Parents to the school site
- l) Collection and drop-off of children to school
- m) Communicating/passing on messages to the school
- n) Class Celebrations and School Performances

### **a) Grouping of children**

Children in years 2 to year 6 will learn alongside the other children in their class only. Children will use the school hall or gym at lunchtime in year group bubbles in order to make it logistically possible for all children to eat over the lunchtime period; however, they will sit in class bubbles to eat.

Children will use the outdoor space at playtime and lunchtime in phases, but the playground/field will be divided into sections so that each class bubble uses a different area.

EYFS children (and in the Autumn Term, year 1 children) will learn alongside their year group peers. This is in line with the curriculum for these children and in keeping with the way in which learning is best organised for this age range.

It is not possible to have separate toilets for each class or even each year group. Use of the toilet will be monitored to minimize numbers of children using the facilities at the same time and children will be reminded to walk on the left side of the corridor and to maintain social distancing at all times when walking to and using the toilet.

**\*\*To minimize risks, please consider sending your child to the same setting consistently and limit the number of different providers they access. Please see advice available\*\***

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-of-children-attending-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

### **b) Minimising the number of contacts staff and pupils have during the school day**

We will try to limit the number of different adults children will come into contact with throughout the day; however, we are unable to limit this to one adult per group all day, every day, due to the following factors: appropriate supervision (age group being taught and SEND); accommodating part-time staff and job share partnerships; statutory requirements for breaks for staff; covering staff absence;

children's health (e.g. requiring administration from a qualified first aider); and the possible need for SLT involvement.

The government have said that supply staff and other temporary workers, such as our PPA providers, can move between schools. To minimise the numbers of temporary staff entering the school premises we will ask our regular supply teachers or an appropriately experienced member of support staff to cover staff absence wherever possible.

Any supply staff and peripatetic teachers (e.g. Sports Coaches and Merton Music Foundation tutors) will be expected to comply with the school's arrangements for managing and minimising risk, including taking particular care to maintain distance from other staff and pupils.

We are currently liaising with Rock Steady and Merton Music Foundation to see if it will be possible to offer lessons led by these organisations in the Autumn term.

### **c) Educate children about hygiene measures to keeping safe**

A video of The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach is readily available via the school website so that parents can support their child's understanding of health and hygiene

You may choose for your child to wear a mask on the way to school but they must remove this independently when they get school and hand it back to their parent before they enter the school grounds. Children in Year 5 and Year 6 who walk to and from school independently must remove their mask and put it in a plastic bag inside their school bag before entering the school building.

### **d) Washing Hands Regularly**

Hand sanitizer is available in key places throughout the school where sinks are not easily accessible, but otherwise the school policy, in line with government guidance, is that adults and children should wash their hands rather than use hand sanitizer as this is the best way to ensure germs are killed.

"It is essential that everyone washes their hands more often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand washing with soap employs mechanical action that loosens bacteria and viruses from the skin, rinsing them into the drain. Drying hands afterwards makes the skin less hospitable to the virus. Hand sanitiser can be effective if soap is not available or the situation makes using soap less feasible (i.e. when outside) but using hand sanitiser provides none of the virus-destroying friction that rubbing your hands together and rinsing with water provides."

Hand sanitiser should not be sent to school with your child - the children will wash their hands on arrival to school and then regularly throughout the day.

### **e) Cleaning procedures**

The school has an enhanced cleaning schedule in place which ensures more frequent and rigorous cleaning of communal areas, bathrooms and equipment with a focus on frequently touched items such as door handles. This schedule also includes more frequent emptying of bins and the washing of toys and equipment at the end of the session/day. In addition, our regular cleaning team have revised their protocols which include extra time to clean areas where there is a higher risk of cross-contamination.

#### **f) Before and after school extra-curricular clubs**

Weekly before and after school extra-curricular clubs e.g. cookery **will not** commence in Autumn Term as it will be difficult to maintain the bubbles that children will operate in during the day. This could mean that large parts of the school would have to self-isolate if a child within one of these additional groups had tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), or had been in contact with someone who had tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). We will keep this under regular review.

#### **g) Educational visits**

Other than local visits to the park and sites accessible by foot, **there will be no educational visits** during the Autumn Term as taking large numbers of children on a coach or on public transport presents an increased risk of germs spreading and therefore puts the school community at risk of developing the virus.

#### **h) Items brought in from home**

Only items necessary to support learning can be brought onto and off of the school site in order to keep cleaning of equipment to a minimum. This will include your child's school bag, their packed lunch box (although we encourage families to opt for a school dinner in order to reduce the number of items being brought onto the school site) and their communication books.

Water fountains will not be available for children to use and they must bring in their own water bottle. School water bottles will be available for purchase via Parentmail. A payment item has been set for all families if you need to purchase a bottle, please indicate the quantity you require and which house your child/ren are in. From Thursday 3rd September to Friday 11th September we will review this payment item daily so that we can send water bottles home within 24 hours of ordering. After this date, we will view this once a week. The cost of a water bottle is £1.50 and each additional lid is 50p. Nursery and Reception children will also require a water bottle as there will not be an 'Early Years Café' until current restrictions have been lifted.

Children will be able to bring healthy fruit/vegetable snacks into school but these must be in either Tupperware containers or in paper bags to minimise the risk of cross contamination. Please note that children in Early Years (Nursery and Reception) will also need to bring in a fruit snack as currently the free fruit scheme is suspended.

Children in year five or six who walk to and from school on their own may bring in a mobile phone, however, this should be turned off and placed in a clear plastic bag before they come onto the school site.

#### **i) Lost property**

Every item your child takes into school should be clearly labelled with their name as we are currently unable to safely operate our usual lost property systems. In the event that an item belonging to a child is lost and labelled, parents should inform the school via their child's Communication Book. The class teacher will then look for the item, but will not be able to guarantee locating the item immediately. The member of staff will check the appropriate phase lost property box and, if found, will return the item to the child. If, however, the item lost was not labelled, parents should detail any clearly identifiable features to the item that would help members of staff to distinguish it from other items. Although every effort will be taken to locate the lost item, this cannot be guaranteed.

#### **j) Birthday donations**

**Only items necessary to support learning can be brought onto and off of the school site in order to keep cleaning of equipment to a minimum.** Currently, children will not be permitted to bring items from home for each child in their class in order to celebrate their birthday. Instead, we suggest that families consider making a donation to the Curriculum Enhancement Fund or bring one shared item for the entire class that can be quarantined for 72 hours.

#### **k) Lunch and break-times arrangements**

In order to reduce the number of items being transferred between home and school, we encourage all families to opt for a school dinner for their child/ren. School dinners currently cost £2.12 per day. Please note that we have been informed by Chartwells that this is likely to increase, but have not been informed by how much. When we have been fully informed of this increase we will communicate this immediately to all families.

Many staff have been opting for a school dinner when they have been in school during the partial closure and they are delicious! If you do want your child to have a school dinner when they return in September, please complete the Parentmail form that will be sent to you separately – this includes those families who have previously taken up a school dinner option. We are currently serving meals from the summer menu and this will continue during the Autumn Term. Please follow the link below to find out more about this exciting menu:

<https://www.hillcross.merton.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=3640&type=pdf>

Staggered playtime and lunchtimes will facilitate social distancing in dining areas and on the field/playground. This will be in year group bubbles.

Some year groups will use the gym to eat their lunch (including those who have school dinners and packed lunch) in order to accommodate more children and reduce lunchtimes impacting on valuable learning time.

All day nursery children will eat in their learning area.

Wherever possible, children having a packed lunch will eat outside in a specified area.

The school has purchased additional dining tables and picnic benches in order to accommodate a staggered lunchtime.

Please note that all children will be allocated a 20-minute period of time in which to consume their lunch. They will be given a 5-minute notification that this time is coming to an end and then all remaining food will be returned into packed lunch boxes and school dinner food discarded. If, at any time, a significant amount of food is left, parents will be contacted directly by the school to inform them.

#### **l) Classroom set-up**

Classrooms will be re-organised to accommodate greater space between activities/desks and children will be seated side by side and facing forwards.

Where appropriate, children will sit at their desks during whole class sessions.

When children sit on the floor they will sit in a specific spot maintaining as much distance as possible from the children around them.

**m) Parents on school site**

**No parent will be permitted into the school building unless by prior invitation of a member of the Senior Leadership Team.** Therefore, we are unable to support requests to use the toilet.

If parents forget their child’s lunch or medication, they will be admitted to the school site to leave it in a box outside the school office.

Visitors other than the parents are kept to a minimum and are only permitted if absolutely necessary. Upon arrival, visitors sanitise their hands and read through the risk assessment measures in place.

**n) Collection and drop-off of children to school**

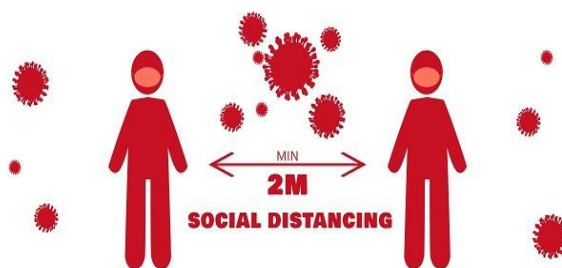
**Arrival**

Arriving at School				
Year Group	Start Time	Site Entrance	Building Entrance	Register Closes
Nursery AM	8.30	Ashridge Car Park	Learning Lab	8.50
Nursery PM	12.15	Ashridge Car Park	School Office	12.20
All Day Nursery	8.30	Ashridge Car Park	Playground Doors	8.50
Reception: Walnut	8.50	Ashridge Car Park	Hazelnut Door	9.00
Reception: Chestnut	8.50	Ashridge Car Park	Art Room Door	9.00
Year 1	8.45	Ashridge Car Park	Classroom Doors	8.55
Year 2	8.45	Ashridge Pedestrian	Classroom Doors	8.55
Year 3: Rowan & Lime	8.40	Ashridge Pedestrian	Orchard Gym Door	8.50
Year 3: Elder	8.40	Ashridge Pedestrian	Quiet Area Gym Door	8.50
Year 4	8.40	Ashridge Pedestrian	Classroom Doors	8.50
Year 5	8.35	Ashridge Pedestrian	Main Door Monkleigh	8.50
Year 6: Juniper	8.35	Ashridge Pedestrian	New Build Back Door	8.50
Year 6: Maple	8.35	Ashridge Pedestrian	Quiet Area Gym Door	8.50
<b>Family Groups</b>	<b>8.45</b>	<b>Ashridge Car Park</b>		



There will be a one-way route for drop off for all parents/children. Entrance will be via the Ashridge Way entrance only.

- **Children from Y2 to Y6 will enter the school site without an adult** and walk in a single file, socially distanced line across the front playground (Y2 to Y6).
- Only parents/carers of children in **morning and all day Nursery, Reception and year 1** will come onto the school site at arrival time (**only one adult per family**). Families will take a one-way route around the back of the school, walking in a single file, socially distanced line. Please be patient and do not try to overtake the family in front of you. All parents will leave via the Monkleigh gate.
- **Parents/carers and children attending afternoon Nursery will enter via the Ashridge Way gate.** Please wait at the car park gate on Ashridge Way at 12.15pm until a member of staff invites you onto the site. Families will walk through the car park in single file maintaining an appropriate social distance from other families. The nursery staff will be waiting at the bottom of the front entrance steps (outside the school office) to welcome your children into the building. Parents and children must not stop to say goodbye to their children. Please ensure the children already have their book bag and water bottle in their hands prior to your arrival at the office area. Parents/Carers will then turn into the pedestrian entrance and walk out via this gate.
- School gates will be closed at 9.00am to ensure school security. Parents will need to seek access to the school site for their child via the buzzer after this time.
- If arriving late, parents will not be allowed access to the school site. The child/ren will need to walk up the pedestrian path on their own and will be met by a member of SLT/admin team and walked externally to their learning space. Parents must watch their child until they have reached the member of school staff.
- All members of the school community to follow the rule:  
*“If the line slows down, you slow down. If the line stops, you stop.”*
- Parents and children must not stop, slow down or reduce their social distance to talk to staff or each other whilst on the school grounds.



### **Collection at the End of the Day/Session**

**All parents will enter the school site via the Ashridge Way entrances only.** If access becomes available earlier than the collection time e.g. because someone leaves the site, please do not enter the grounds until a member of staff walks down and invites you to come in. This is so that social distancing can be maintained should other people need to enter or leave.

Timings will have to be strictly adhered to (please see table below). If parents of children in Year 3-6 arrive before their collection time, they will queue from the pavement by the pedestrian gate along Ashridge Way towards Leamington Ave. If parents of children in Nursery, Reception, year One and year Two arrive earlier than their collection time, they will queue from the car park gate along Ashridge Way towards Hillcross Avenue. They should not enter the site via the pedestrian entrance with the parents collecting children in Years 3-6. Please use the opposite side of the road to reach the end of the line.

Year Group	Site Entrance	Finish Time	Site Exit
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Nursery AM	Ashridge Pedestrian	11.30	Ashridge car park Monkleigh Car Gate  Year 5 & 6 children who have permission to walk home alone will leave the school site via the Monkleigh Road pedestrian gate at 2.55pm.
Nursery PM	Ashridge Car Park	3.10-3.20	
All Day Nursery	Ashridge Car Park	3.10-3.20	
Reception	Ashridge Car Park	3.10-3.20	
Year 1	Ashridge Car Park	3.10-3.20	
Year 2	Ashridge Car Park	3.10-3.20	
Year 3	Ashridge Pedestrian	2.55-3.05	
Year 4	Ashridge Pedestrian	2.55-3.05	
Year 5	Ashridge Pedestrian	2.55-3.05	
Year 6	Ashridge Pedestrian	2.55-3.05	

**Gates will close promptly at 3.05pm** to allow for our younger children to safely exit the school building and line up on the playground to be collected from 3.10pm. Any children from Y3-6 whose parent/carer is late will remain outside, but we cannot guarantee that there will be space or adequate staffing ratios for them to remain in a socially distanced bubble because the younger children will be using the allocated spaces in the playground.

**Please note, where families have children with different finish times, they will need to collect the child who finishes earliest and then walk around the block and participate in another collection procedure.**

Whilst we are aware that this may be an inconvenience for some families, in line with government guidance, it is important for everyone's safety that we stagger the timings at the end of the day to minimise congestion at the school gates and in surrounding roads. If we do not have two distinct pick up times, our children and staff will have to stand outside in all weathers for 25 minutes at the end of every day.

**We encourage families to let year five and six children walk to and from school on their own or to say good-bye to their children a couple of minutes away from the school in order to avoid congestion at the school gates and on the local roads.** At the end of the day, if you do not want them to walk home all the way, you may wish to consider waiting a minute or two down the road. This will enable them to develop their independence. Please note, if you do want your child to walk home alone, if you have not done so already, you will need to complete the appropriate form which can be found on the school website. Please reiterate to your child that they should maintain social distancing at all times - even when they have left the school site they will be representing the school and their conduct should continue to demonstrate their respect and understanding of their responsibility to keep others safe.

The car park gate will be opened at 3.10pm for families with children in Nursery – Year 2.

- Once on the school site, there will be a one-way route for collecting the children. Families will walk slowly in a single file, socially distanced line across the playground and leave via the Monkleigh gate. Please be patient and do not try to overtake the family in front of you.
- All members of the school community to follow the rule:  
***“If the line slows down, you slow down. If the line stops, you stop.”***
- The children will be sent by the staff to their parent/carer. Parents and children must not stop to greet each other, or to give snacks, put children in pushchairs or for any other reason.

- Parents and children must not stop, slow down or reduce their social distance to talk to staff or each other whilst on the school grounds.
- Please hold hands with younger siblings or have them in a push chair in order to ensure family groups stay together at all times. Older children must remain with the family group at all times in order to maintain social distancing between groups.

In order to maintain social distancing with so many adults and children on the school site at the same time, the children will be lined up on the playground outside whatever the weather so please make sure your child has appropriate clothing such as a sun hat, raincoat and, as winter draws in, a warm winter coat with them every day.

In order to keep the line moving, staff will not be able to verbally discuss each child's day. If there is important information to share we will do so via telephone, or via email if it is less urgent.

**Parents should not gather at the school gates at the beginning or end of the day and should not enter the school premises, even if the gates are open, without first being invited to do so by a member of staff.**

**o) Communicating with the school**

- **All communication should come to school via [info@hillcross.merton.sch.uk](mailto:info@hillcross.merton.sch.uk) with your child's name and class in subject line.**
- Messages relevant for the school day should be **emailed prior to 8.15am**, where possible, so that they can be delivered to the learning group leader before the child arrives. Emails will be checked throughout the day, but we cannot guarantee how long it may take for them to reach the learning leader if emailed after this time.
- Verbal messages should not be given in the playground or at the classroom door as this slows the line of families and increases the risk of maintaining an appropriate social distance.
- Notes should not be written and handed to staff.
- In the case of an emergency only, please telephone the school office.

**p) Class Celebrations and School Performances**

We will be unable to hold year group performances in the usual way until the restrictions in place due to the safety measures are lifted. In true Hillcross fashion, we will explore alternative ways to give children, staff and parents the opportunity to enjoy these shared experiences.

**2. Procedures in place if a member of staff or child present with symptoms of coronavirus**

- a) Symptoms
- b) In the events of a child becoming unwell
- c) Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process

d) Results of the test

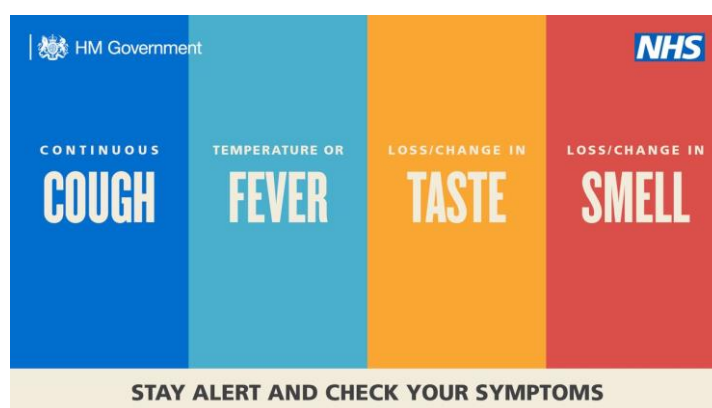
**a) Symptoms**

We will not be taking the children's temperature on arrival at school. Parents/carers are asked not to send your child to school if they, or anyone in the household is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19).

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are the recent onset of:

- A high temperature
- A new continuous cough
- A loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

If anyone in the school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), **they will be sent home** and advised to follow '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)', which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 7 days and should [arrange to have a test](#) to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.



**b) In the event of a child becoming unwell**

Parents/carers must come and collect their child **immediately** to minimise the risk to the rest of the school community.

Children presenting with symptoms of Covid-19 will be taken to the meeting room where they will be supervised by adult in full PPE (inc. eye protection) if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).

**c) Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process**

The government has asked all schools to ensure that staff members and parents/carers understand that they will need to be ready and willing to:

- [book a test](#) if they are displaying symptoms. Staff and pupils must not come into the school if they have symptoms, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in school. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit
- provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace
- [self-isolate](#) if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. Tests can be booked online through the NHS [testing and tracing for coronavirus website](#), or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing.

### **Parents must to inform the school immediately of the results of a test.**

#### **d) Results of the test**

##### **NEGATIVE RESULT**

If someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating.

##### **POSITIVE RESULT**

If someone tests positive, they should follow the [‘stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection’](#) and must continue to self-isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The 7-day period starts from the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

#### **Response of school to a positive result**

Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class or group within their childcare or education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, **Public Health England’s local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take.** In some cases, a larger number of other children, young people may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole class, year group or site.

In the event of a local outbreak, the PHE health protection team or local authority may advise a school or number of schools to close temporarily to help control transmission.

A contingency plan is in place for this eventuality which may involve a return to remaining open only for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers, and providing remote education for all other pupils.

### **3. The teaching and learning of children at Hillcross Primary School**

#### **a) Curriculum**

- b) Resources and Equipment
- c) Feedback
- d) Catch-up curriculum
- e) Music – Singing
- f) Physical Education
- g) Assessments in October
- h) Attendance
- i) Primary schools Statutory Assessment for 2021

#### **a) Curriculum**

The government has set out clear expectations on what schools are expected to teach when pupils return in September. At Hillcross we will continue to provide an ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects. However, there may need to be changes to some subjects - such as PE and music - to ensure they can be delivered as safely as possible (see below)

#### **b) Resources and Equipment**

To reduce the likelihood of germs transferring between children, we have removed most soft furnishings and the children will not have access to equipment that is hard to clean (such as those with intricate parts). Malleable material such as sand and playdough will not be available for children to share.

Children in Y2 to Y6 will be provided with their own resources to prevent the need for movement around the classroom and cross contamination of resources.

Subject specific resources will be cleaned before being used by another class.

Maths and English resources such as Numicon and dictionaries that are usually shared between year groups will be shared equally between classes, or will be cleaned before being used by another class.

PE and playground equipment will be limited to use within the class bubble only and will be cleaned before being used by another class.

The school library will remain closed in the Autumn term but each class will have a reading corner and children will be able to borrow books from the 'class library' until we are able to resume with the operation of the main library.

#### **c) Feedback**

Whereas previously feedback could only be verbal, government guidance now states:

'Pupils and teachers can take books and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided, especially where this does not contribute to pupil education and development.'

Since written feedback in books, in addition to verbal feedback, significantly contributes to children's progress, staff will once again be able to mark books and provide feedback to children, who will be expected to respond to marking in line with the school's feedback policy.

Now, more than ever, feedback is crucial in order to close the gap between current and desired learning.

#### **d) Catch-up curriculum**

There is, and will continue to be, a lot of talk and speculation about how schools are going to catch up with missed learning during lockdown. We are very proud that the vast majority of our children engaged with our home-schooling curriculum and so continued with their learning during this time. We appreciate that each child will have experienced this very differently according to the context of each family home and so will be spending the first half of the Autumn Term establishing what the children now know and what they needed to know.

The curriculum will also take on board children's well-being in order that their transition from lockdown back into the routine of school life supports any individual anxieties, bereavements and uncertainty they display. Please follow the following link for support, guidance and range of valuable resources to support mental health and well-being:

<https://www.hillcross.merton.sch.uk/page/?title=Mental+Health+and+Wellbeing&pid=1826>

#### **e) Music – Singing**

##### **Government guidance states that:**

'Schools should note that there may be an additional risk of infection in environments where you or others are singing, chanting, playing wind or brass instruments or shouting. This applies even if individuals are at a distance. Schools should consider how to reduce the risk, particularly when pupils are playing instruments or singing in small groups such as in music lessons by, for example, physical distancing and playing outside wherever possible, limiting group sizes to no more than 15, positioning pupils back-to-back or side-to-side, avoiding sharing of instruments, and ensuring good ventilation. Singing, wind and brass playing should not take place in larger groups such as school choirs and ensembles, or school assemblies. Further more detailed DfE guidance will be published shortly.'

As such we there will not be any music lessons or collective worships that involve playing of wind or brass instruments and singing in order to uphold government guidance and keep the school community safe. Once the DfE publishes further guidance we will update parents of any revised measures.

#### **f) Physical Education**

Physical education, sport and physical activity will be provided following the safety measures in our system of controls. Pupils will be kept in consistent groups, sports equipment thoroughly cleaned between each use by different individual groups, and contact sports avoided. Outdoor sports should be prioritised where possible, and large indoor spaces used where it is not, maximising distancing between pupils and paying scrupulous attention to cleaning and hygiene. We will work closely with the Merton School Sports Partnership and refer to the range of advice from groups such as Sports England and the Youth Sport Trust to ensure we follow the most up to date guidance.

Please note, at this current time there will be **no swimming sessions** taking place during the Autumn Term.

On their designated P.E day, your child must arrive at school wearing full and correct P.E kit as this will be worn for the entire day and therefore preventing additional items of clothing being brought in from home and changed into. Other than a school jumper, no other clothing item should be brought to school on these days. Please note that this information is not relevant to Nursery or Reception children.

#### **g) Assessments in October**

So that we can identify gaps in children's knowledge and understanding, we will be carrying out mid-term assessments at the end of Autumn 1. This will then provide class teachers with a clear understanding of curriculum gaps. Governing funding, tutoring programmes, quality first teaching (by class teachers and support staff), intervention groups and robust and rigorous data scrutiny will ensure that children are appropriately targeted.

#### **h) Attendance**

It is vital that children return to school in September - for their educational progress, for their wellbeing, and for their wider development. **School attendance will again be mandatory** from the beginning of the new academic year. This means that the **legal duty on parents** to send children to school regularly will apply.

Shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. Please see: [guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable](#)

#### **i) Primary schools Statutory Assessment for 2021**

The Standards and Testing Agency has published information about statutory assessments next year: <https://mailchi.mp/education.gov.uk/national-curriculum-assessments-update-for-202021?e=9a693bceb7>

The DfE intends that all statutory assessments next will take place according to the usual timetable. In addition, the DfE is proposing a phonics check for pupils moving into Year 2. This will take place in the second half of the Autumn Term with schools choosing materials from a previous year. Pupils that do not meet the expected standard will re-take the check in June 2021. Further guidance will be published in September 2020.

### **4. Preparations and information for September**

- a) Child Well-being
- b) Community COVID-19 Charter
- c) Additional INSET day
- d) School uniform
- e) Travelling to and from school



- f) The Copse
- g) Remote Learning
- h) Medication for your child.

#### **a) Child Well-being**

Hillcross is well-equipped to support children's mental health and well-being. There are a number of whole school initiatives, already well-established, that will enable children and staff to work together to identify concerns and put recovery techniques in place where necessary. In addition, staff will receive specific training to support resilience and recovery prior to the children's return.

We do have a number of Emotional Literacy Support Assistants in school and a CAMHS in School clinician who may be able to support children facing more significant challenges.

It is vitally important that you let us know if there have been any bereavements in the family or if your child has experienced any other significant events whilst not attending school as this will help us to more effectively support their well-being as they transition back to school.

The Mental Health and Well-being page on our website is a good starting point for parents who have any concerns.

#### **b) Community COVID-19 Charter**

New school rules relating to safety measures are in place to prevent transmission of germs. These can be found on the Coronavirus page on the school website and will be referred to regularly with children. This ensures children are clear of the school's expectations and reminds them that, if they deliberately do not follow the measures in place, there will be consequences in line with our behaviour policy.

#### **c) Additional INSET day**

We are delighted that we will be able to welcome all children back in the Autumn Term. For staff, the term will start with the pre-planned INSET day for staff on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September. **The school will be closed for a further day on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September** to enable the staff team to familiarise themselves with the operational impact of the necessary safety measures and to ensure all necessary actions have been taken in order that the school can open safely for children, staff and parents.

The decision to close the school for an extra day at the beginning of the new academic year has not been taken lightly. We are eager to welcome back the children after such a long period of absence for many of them, but we must ensure that we are ready to do so safely. The operational impact of the considerably different 'business as usual' should not be underestimated. There are a significant number of changes that need to be understood by staff to ensure the safety measures are upheld, as well as furniture, equipment and resources that need to be purchased and organised to facilitate the implementation of them. Whilst a small number of staff are contracted to work during the summer holidays, and will be doing as much as possible to prepare for September, the majority of the staff team are not. Therefore, the additional school closure day will be vital to ensure we are ready to safely receive the children in on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September. Please note some nursery children and all reception children do not return to school until Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September in order to accommodate home visits for the families that are new to the school.

#### **d) School uniform**

All children will be expected to be wearing full school uniform when they return in September.

Please click the link to view the school uniform policy

<https://www.hillcross.merton.sch.uk/page/?title=Policies&pid=41&action=saved>

Although children had previously been permitted to wear trainers, this is no longer the case unless it is your child's designated P.E day, in which case they are required to arrive in school and wear their PE kit all day (on this day no school uniform, other than a jumper, should be brought in to limit the transportation of items from home into school). Please note that this information is not relevant to Nursery or Reception children.

Full school uniform can be purchased, as usual

from: <https://www.mapac.com/education/parents/uniform/hillcrossprimarySM4>

With regard to the cleaning of school uniform, the latest advice from the government is that:

*'Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal.'*

#### **e) Travelling to and from school**

The government has asked us to request that families and staff walk or cycle to school where possible. Due to the procedures for drop-off and collection, children are unable to keep their bikes and scooters in the bike sheds at the current time; however, parents can choose to take home bikes at drop-off and bring them back at home-time. Children in year five or six who travel to and from school on their own via bicycle may bring their bike onto the school site but this must be discussed with the school first so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

#### **f) The Copse**

Until recently, government guidance in relation to managing the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that we were not able to operate our breakfast and after school club (The Copse). We are delighted to inform you that this guidance has now changed and we are re-opening this provision in September.

In order to re-open there will be some variations and changes in order to maintain the same health protection measures as the school, e.g. keeping children in separate, smaller 'bubbles'. This will mean that, whilst some children would attend this provision in The Copse building, two 'bubbles' of children will be using a designated area in the main school instead. The bubbles will be based on age: Nursery to Year 1; Year 2 to Year 4; and Year 5 and Year 6.

#### **g) Remote Learning**

While the aim is to have all pupils back at school in the autumn, the government have asked every school to plan for the possibility of a local lockdown and how they will ensure continuity of education.

The teaching and learning resources prepared by class teachers when all year groups return, will enable the curriculum to be transitioned seamlessly between delivery in school and at home via Google Classroom. Those children and families in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 who have not yet got access to Google Classroom will be introduced to this in September as this will be used as the Home

Learning platform for the whole school. This means that, should there be a local outbreak, individual case or nationwide lockdown in place, children's learning can continue.

Current feedback from staff, parents and children in relation to our 'Remote Learning Strategy' has been overwhelmingly positive, however, we will be reviewing this in September to ensure it works for all families and children, especially for those children who are not able to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice.

**h) Medication for your child.**

We sent home medication with children who were in school on the last day prior to the partial school closure. If your child requires any form of medication, please make sure this is returned to school on their first day back. Any medication left in school, may now be out of date so wherever possible, please ensure that you have additional in-date medication ready to send in to school with your child on their first day – we will return any additional medication where appropriate.

If your child has developed a medical condition that the school were not previously aware of, please ensure that you email [info@hillcross.merton.sch.uk](mailto:info@hillcross.merton.sch.uk) and inform us of this before the end of the summer holidays so that someone can call you in September to discuss arrangements for their care.