

PARENT HANDBOOK

November 2020

This document is supplementary to our regular handbook, policies and procedures and covers the additional information for all pupils at Hollygirt School from September 2020 and until further notice. The updates added since September have been highlighted in yellow so you can more readily identify the changes.

The school has compiled a fulsome set of risk assessments in order to ensure the safety of our pupils, staff and visitors, as far as is reasonably practicable. The guidance contained here will be strictly enforced and we are looking to parents to understand what we are doing and why and to help us mitigate the risks.

We have put this together for all Hollygirt School parents whose children are attending school from September 2020 and updated in November 2020. Following the generic information, is some important specific information for how things will work at Hollygirt.

The virus and how it spreads

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) is the name given to the 2019 novel coronavirus. COVID-19 is the name given to the disease associated with the virus. SARS-CoV-2 is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.

There is not enough epidemiological information at this time to determine how easily this virus spreads between people, but it is currently estimated that, on average, one infected person will infect between two and three other people.

The virus seems to be transmitted mainly via small respiratory droplets through sneezing, coughing, or when people interact with each other for some time in close proximity (usually less than one metre). These droplets can then be inhaled, or they can land on surfaces that others may come into contact with, who can then get infected when they touch their nose, mouth or eyes. The virus can survive on different surfaces from several hours (copper, cardboard) up to a few days (plastic and stainless steel). However, the amount of viable virus declines over time and may not always be present in sufficient numbers to cause infection.

The incubation period for COVID-19 (i.e. the time between exposure to the virus and onset of symptoms) is currently estimated to be between one and 14 days.

We know that the virus can be transmitted when people who are infected show symptoms such as coughing. There is also some evidence suggesting that transmission can occur from a person that is infected even two days before showing symptoms; however, uncertainties remain about the effect of transmission by asymptomatic persons.

The infectious period may begin one to two days before symptoms appear, but people are likely most infectious during the symptomatic period, even if symptoms are mild and very non-specific. The infectious period is now estimated to last for 7-12 days in moderate cases and up to two weeks on average in severe cases.

Is it Coronavirus, a common cold or seasonal flu?

If you have a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste, it could be coronavirus (COVID-19).

The common cold is characterised by:

- a blocked or runny nose
- a sore throat
- headaches
- muscle aches
- coughs
- sneezing
- a raised temperature
- pressure in your ears and face
- loss of taste and smell

Whilst there are some similar symptoms, Coronavirus is not linked to the blocked/runny nose which characterises the onset of a cold.

Flu is a more severe and debilitating cold.

All are viruses.

Difference between cold and flu	
Cold	Flu
Appears gradually	Appears quickly within a few hours
Affects mainly your nose and throat	Affects more than just your nose and throat

Difference between cold and flu

Cold

Makes you feel unwell, but you're OK to carry on as normal (for example, go to work)

Flu

Makes you feel exhausted and too unwell to carry on as normal

A pupil with cold symptoms but not those associated with Coronavirus can still come to school if they are otherwise well. Children with more severe cold/flu symptoms would normally and usually take a couple of days at home to recuperate.

NB: The stated Coronavirus symptoms (a temperature, a new or continuous cough and a loss of sense of taste and smell) are not usually all present together and occasionally we have had a positive test from children and staff who have displayed none of the traditional symptoms. The latter is the most prevalent in our experience (loss of sense of taste and smell).

If you are in any doubt please make an appointment for a test at your local centre.

The most recent government advice:

You will be aware that the guidance changes frequently and there are fewer restrictions than previously, except in some identified areas of the country where the infection rate is on the rise and where different rules apply.

The basic requirements are:

- Wash hands frequently
- Retain social distancing
- Wear a mask in public indoor spaces and on public transport (over the age of 11)

Additionally, new regulations from 5th November - 2nd December (currently)

1. Stay at home, except for specific purposes.
2. Avoid meeting people you do not live with, except for specific purposes.
3. Close certain businesses and venues (not including schools).

All the guidance about the new regulations can be read here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november>

Personal Hygiene

The advice central to self-care involves some key principles:

Handwashing

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.

At Hollygirt our minimum requirement is that all children will wash their hands before snack time, after playtime, before lunchtime, after lunchtime play and after each period of outside activity. The washrooms will be frequently checked to update supplies of soap and paper towels, to clean down and empty bins. A cleaner has been appointed throughout the school day for this purpose. She will ensure all touch points, door handles, key pads etc are regularly sanitised. **Teachers have their own cleaning kits to ensure all spaces are cleaned frequently and always between bubble changes.**

Clothes

Full school uniform will be worn. It should be kept clean and pupils are requested to change out of it as soon as they arrive home. **On PE days all pupils can wear their sports kit all day.**

In the colder weather, because we have windows and classroom doors open, it is chillier. We are happy for pupils to wear additional layers, e.g. long-sleeved t-shirts underneath their uniform. There may be visible edges, this is fine. With shirts, jumpers and blazers as well, there should be ample body warmth. We will permit coats in classrooms as a last resort but not hoodies or other non-uniform outer layers. Hats and gloves are recommended for travel, walking to games and playtimes.

Please note that the school uniform supplier (Schoolwear Solutions) shop is closed for the 'new lockdown' period.

Sneezing and coughing

Children should carry tissues in their pocket. 'Catch it, bin it' reminders will be on posters around the school. The general advice is that we learn to sneeze into the crook of the elbow. Pupils coughing will trigger an alert to possible symptoms.

Don't touch the face

Perhaps the hardest of all is the instruction that we should not touch our faces.

Masks

The guidance on mask wearing has now been published for schools.

All staff, throughout Junior and Senior School and pupils from Year 7 upwards should wear a mask at all times in public places, corridors, etc. Visors may additionally be worn if required.

Staff in Senior School may request that pupils mask wear in certain situations in class: where staff to pupil social distancing is not possible because of the nature of the task or where 1:1 support is offered.

We are additionally requesting that all children from Year 5 upwards carry a mask in a sealed plastic bag in their blazer pockets. Currently we are asking that these children wear masks in the Computing Room. This is because of the nature of that particular physical space. The computers are quite close to each other and the room is air-conditioned. There is no natural ventilation in the room as it is an inside space. This may also be the case in DT lessons or where a staff member is from out of their bubble.

We are requesting that masks are the responsibility of the child/parent, that fabric masks are laundered at night and stored when not in use in a sealed plastic bag. They are not transferable between children. Disposable masks should be taken home for safe disposal. It is recommended that this is in a sealed bag, within another sealed bag.

If pupils travel on public transport, or school buses they should wear one for their journey. Car sharing is no longer recommended, even when mask wearing.

School will not be organising trips or visits which require the sharing of transport for the second half of this term.

Teachers may choose to wear a mask and some will additionally wear a visor in lessons where social distancing is not possible because of the nature of activities, or because the teacher needs to be additionally cautious.

Visitors and contractors on site will wear a mask when children are on site.

All Junior children, may wear a mask at their parents' discretion. Subject to the guidance above.

We request that parents collecting their children on the Avenue wear masks and remind all about the guidance to socially distance by 2 metres. This is 6' 6" for those who are still working in feet and inches - it's a big gap!

'Bubbles' (Social distancing and risk mitigation)

From September the school will be divided into 4 bubbles: (i) EYFS and KS1; (ii) KS2; (iii) KS3; (iv) KS4. These bubbles will be able to share equipment and can play together. The bubbles will not mix. In reality, for most of the day the children will move in their respective year groups/classes and will be mixing with

a much smaller group of children for most of the time. From November, we are seeking to reduce the Junior School bubbles further by identifying discrete areas of the playground for their usage, and in reducing the numbers of adults the children come in to contact with, by some timetable amends, where this is possible. It is our intention to have 4 junior groups: (i) Nursery and Reception; (ii) Year 1 and Year 2; (iii) Year 3 and Year 4; and (iv) Year 5 and Year 6 to minimise contacts where practicable.

Where possible, older children will be required to social distance from each other. They will be given specific instructions on physical contact on the first day of term. This is continually reinforced, though is not always possible in the classroom. We have created discrete play spaces for the Year 7, 8 and 9 in the garden to reduce contact with these individual year groups.

School times

For Seniors, attendance is required at the normal school times: 8.45am - 3.45pm/

Junior School finishing times have been amended from 9th November as follows:

EYFS and Year 1 and 2 will finish their school day at 3.15pm. To ensure they get their full learning hours, we are requesting that junior children arrive ready for an 8.45am start.

Years 3-6 hours are as normal, with a 3.30pm finish.

All children in the Junior School can arrive from 8.00am. We find the arrival time between 08.00 and 08.45 allows for a better spread and we have not altered our pattern here. Areas have been identified in the mornings for play, for those children arriving before the official start time.

At the end of the day children not collected at the stated times above will go to After School Club (further details later on in this document).

We have amended lesson times slightly to ensure that the bubbles can move between lessons when required without close or prolonged contact. These changes are within the school day

Symptoms and actions:

Children must not attend school if they or anyone in their household is presenting with symptoms. I remind you symptoms are:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If a child exhibits symptoms whilst at school, they will be removed from the bubble and taken to the 'holding place'. The room will be ventilated and will have a washroom facility for their discrete use. At this stage, parents will be contacted to collect the child. The supervising member of staff will wear appropriate PPE (Fluid resistant mask, gloves, apron). The child and members of their household should then self-isolate for 14 days or until a negative test result is received. At this stage, there will be a deep clean of the used areas, but the rest of the bubble can continue. Parents are requested to get a test done to accurately identify if the child has the illness and to keep school informed. It is especially important that school gets results as soon as possible if the result is positive, as we have a duty to engage NHS track and trace and contact Public Health England. With a positive result, the whole bubble will have to be sent home for 14 days self-isolation. The same applies to the members of staff in the bubble. If the result is negative, the child can return to their school bubble. Testing is available by appointment at one of the many testing centres around the town. Results are usually received back within 24 hours. We are aware that as the new term begins and when the weather breaks, there are usually coughs and colds aplenty in schools. Please keep your children at home and get them checked just in case: do not assume 'it's just a cold' ... the testing may not be pleasant but it is a sure way to put your minds at ease. If symptoms present in school, we have to send a child home. Hollygirt will keep parents informed if there is a suspected case in school and of the results of testing. The child will not be named.

Parents will not be allowed on site

We have further guidance from 5th November to restrict all visits that are not absolutely necessary. Therefore, all meetings will be conducted online. We will instruct you if we believe a face to face meeting is absolutely necessary and our stringent visitor arrangements would be in place in that eventuality. Junior staff will be available on the Avenue at the end of the day, socially distanced, for brief conversations. We are also happy to chat to you on the phone.

Arrival in the morning

In the Junior School children can arrive at school from 8am – 8:30am for before school care. All children in all year groups need to arrive via Elm Avenue where a member of staff will be waiting to escort the children into school. Parents are still not permitted on premises and there will be no access via the back gate (except after After-School Club - see later). We ask parents to socially distance on Elm Avenue and only approach the gate once the previous parent has left. The playground will be marked into areas so that new smaller bubbles will be socially distanced from each other. All children will go indoors at 8.30am when the Early Years and KS1 children will start their scheduled day.

The member of staff on the gate in Juniors will go in at 8.45am but any Year 5 and 6 who arrive between 8.30am and 8.45pm will need to be dropped off at Villa Road, and ring the bell on the door there for admittance.

All pupils arriving after 8.45pm must report to the receptionist at Senior School who will escort them to their class.

There will be no breakfast available at the moment.

Senior children can enter the building singly as they arrive from 7.45am, sanitise their hands and proceed directly to their form rooms.

End of day arrangements

Junior children will be brought to Elm Avenue for collection. This includes the Year 5/6 children who are at Villa Road. They will wait in bubble groups with the staff in supervision. Parents are requested to wait socially distanced.

Seniors will be dismissed to make their own way home at the end of the day. There will be a careful flow out of the building to ensure the bubbles do not intermingle.

After School Club

The After School Club will operate for the usual hours from 3.45 to 5.30pm. The junior school bubbles will be kept in different rooms with separate staff. **The smaller bubbles will be separated further if the two spaces do not allow for sufficient social distancing.** Parents are requested to call to say they have arrived, and we recommend to the back gate of junior school for this purpose, and the child will be brought out to you. The phone number for this purpose is: 07519 002783

Lunch arrangements

To avoid conflicts of bubbles and queuing, for the first half of term operated a pre ordered sandwich bag service only. **From November 2nd, the Junior School will receive a hot lunch on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. We have fully risk assessed this. The Year 5 and 6 will normally be served their lunches in Villa Road hall. We are anticipating extending the hot lunch provision to seniors on Tuesdays and Thursdays as soon as it is possible to do so.** On grab bag days, the pupils will choose their options which will be bagged up individually and delivered to their classrooms. The lunch is included in the junior school fee. Seniors may bring a pack up from home. **The menu is published on the website.** Each grab bag will include a minimum of a sandwich of choice, fruit, dessert and a drink. Other options are currently still under consideration.

Snacks and Tuck Shop

There will be no senior school tuck shop **this term.**

Children can bring in their own snacks, which, for younger ones should be in easy to open containers, and have products which can be peeled by the children or opened without adult assistance. **I remind parents that we are a NUT FREE school.**

All pupils should bring their own full, refillable water bottle.

PE and Sports

We are committed to maintaining the amount of time allocated to PE activities on the curriculum. However, **for this term**, there will be amendments made to the taught curriculum so that we do not need to travel by bus. There will be no junior swimming. There will be no team sports, and no fixtures for this period either. We are hoping to resume normal practice as soon as it is safe to do so.

Peripatetic lessons

I can confirm that Speech and Drama Lessons **will not recommence this term**. Peripatetic lessons in **music have resumed with further additional risk mitigations**.

Extra-curricular clubs and activities

We have recommenced a few of our ECA activities at lunchtime, but these are still greatly reduced. Each one is individually risk assessed. We will build up this provision as soon as it is possible to do so.

Play times

Break and Play times will be at separate times for each bubble. Play equipment will be limited and cleaned after use.

Movement around school

We will amend the lesson times slightly to avoid bubbles mixing between lessons. This will not impact on the length of the school day.

Classroom organisation

The classrooms will be organised with front facing desks/tables and the teachers' position will be such that they can socially distance. **The teachers' positions will be marked out in a 2m box, to ensure they can mitigate contact risk and add a visual reminder.**

Things from home

Each child should bring with them a pencil case with stationery items as listed in the parents' handbook. Apart from their bags, snacks and essential school items, no other peripheral stuff should be brought from home.

Parents meetings/social gatherings/curriculum meetings/parents' evenings

We have successfully run a number of these events online, and will continue with this method. We are currently trialling a new online platform to facilitate senior parent meetings. Our normal calendar of events is severely curtailed because of restrictions on gatherings, and we are sorry that some of the social activities which parents look forward to are not able to happen.

Trips and visits

To support the curriculum, we may take local trips and visits, each separately risk assessed and with permission requirements from home. However, we are currently not permitting any trips where coach travel is needed.

Books and paper items

These items may go between home and school.

Assemblies and larger in school gatherings

Assemblies will go ahead within the stipulated bubbles or smaller groups of children. Anything for whole school attendance will be attended virtually in the classrooms.

Prize Giving

This is currently not going ahead at the pre-published and usual time. We will reschedule when we are able. We will therefore not be having our occasional day off school which is granted in lieu of prize giving attendance. Therefore, Friday 4th December will be a normal school day

Teachers and support workers

The teachers have to socially distance from the children (with the exception of our younger pupils) and from each other.

Health and Safety measures taken in school

- All building checks on water supply, alarms testing, heating and ventilation, mains supplies, heating and security have been carried out.
- The buildings have been generally inspected to ensure they are ready for reopening.
- The used classrooms have been cleared of soft furnishings, soft toys, sand, playdoh, and toys with parts that cannot be easily cleaned
- We have posters in place in key places to advise children, staff and parents of required actions. All essential information, will be reinforced regularly with children, and staff will be trained in the new procedures.

- The school has identified Mr Dean's old office as the 'holding room' should a child or member of staff develop symptoms in school.
- We have increased the number of administrative staff working from home and have build in screens in some of our smaller offices.

A stringent cleaning schedule has been drawn up and two cleaners will be on site throughout the school day to clean all used equipment, wipe all hard surfaces and ensure that all washrooms are topped up with supplies throughout the day. We have good supplies of cleaning materials in stock and teachers will have disinfectant wipes and other cleaning materials to use in between cleaner visits. Children will only share equipment within bubbles and wipes enable items to be cleaned between users where required. Toys with small components will be put through the dishwasher.

All other pupil Health and Safety requirements including first aiders, fire marshals and safeguarding will operate as normal. There will be a fire evacuation practices as per the normal timetable. Staff providing first aid will wear PPE.

Our contact with Public Health England/East Midlands Health Protection Team

We are in contact whenever required to notify PHE of positive cases, and the numbers of children requested to self-isolate as a consequence. You will receive formal notification of our confirmed cases which impact on our community. We also use these bodies as sources of advice.

Pam Hutley 6/11/20