

# HEDDON-ON-THE-WALL ST. ANDREW'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Mr A Wheatley: Headteacher



Tuesday 1st September 2020

Dear Parents,

I am sure you are aware that the Government released further guidance last week for the full opening of schools to all pupils for September. I am delighted to let you know we will all be closer to normality this term but there are lots of things we need to consider in order to ensure we reduce the risk of any outbreaks of COVID-19 infection. The School and staff are dedicated to ensuring School is a safe and happy place where children can thrive, whilst adhering to all safeguarding measures necessary to keep children, staff and families safe.

The document can be found [here](#).

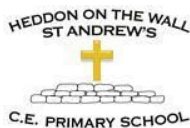
The rationale for fully opening this term is as follows:

- *The prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) has decreased;*
- *The NHS Test and Trace system is up and running;*
- *Public Health England is clear about the measures that need to be in place to create a safer environment within school;*
- *Returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing;*
- *The risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus is low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school;*
- *Lower academic achievement also translates into long-term economic costs due to having a less well-qualified workforce. This affects the standard of living that today's pupils will have over the course of their entire life;*
- *For many households, school closures have also affected their ability to work. As the economy begins to recover, we need to remove this barrier so parents and carers can return to work.*

The guidance clearly set out the actions schools must take to minimise risk of transmission of the virus and it sets out a system of controls, endorsed by Public Health England.

Essential measures include:

- *A requirement that people who are ill stay at home;*
- *Robust hand and respiratory hygiene;*
- *Enhanced cleaning arrangements;*



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Colossians 3:23



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- *Active engagement with NHS Test and Trace. It is important that parents and carers engage with us in this process so that we can identify an issue at the earliest point;*
- *Formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable.*

For further information about how the school day will operate, please see the 'September 2020 Frequently Asked Questions' document attached. I appreciate it is a lengthy document but there is a lot to share!

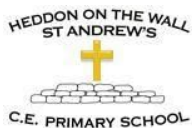
The plans we have put into place are directly related to the guidance published last week. If the situation and guidance changes it may be necessary to amend the plans detailed below at short notice. The School will endeavour to keep you up to date with any changes as quickly as possible.

If you have any further questions, or you have any additional concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Once again I would like to pass on thanks from myself and all staff and Academy Committee members for all of your support during this difficult time. We are very much looking forward to welcoming your children back into School.

Yours sincerely

Mr. A. Wheatley,  
Headteacher



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## September 2020 Frequently Asked Questions

### **When will children return to school?**

All children will return to school on **Wednesday 2nd September**.

### **How will children be grouped in September?**

The children will be grouped into Key Stage bubbles ie: Early Years, Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2. Children will be in full classes of up to 30 and they will remain with their class throughout the School day for lessons. At break times and lunchtimes classes will mix in the larger Key Stage bubble. Restrictions will be in place so that each bubble has its own designated yard. Children from different bubbles in the School will not mix together or have any contact with each other.

In Early Years (Nursery and Reception Classes) the bubble will allow children access to all areas of learning across the Early Years Unit and Outdoor Area.

In Out of School Club the children will have to remain in their Key Stage bubble in their designated area of the Hall. Early Years children will have Out of School Club in Nursery. Key Stage bubbles will not mix at Out of School Club.

### **Will children and adults be socially distancing in school?**

No. As there will be up to 30 children in classes, children will not be able to socially distance between their peers. It is important for their wellbeing that they are able to play with their friends. We will teach them social distancing and games they can play without touching or getting too close, but our main method of reducing the risk will be through frequent and efficient personal hygiene practices, i.e. regular handwashing and hand sanitising, and respiratory hygiene (catch it, bin it, kill it) and by staying in our bubbles.

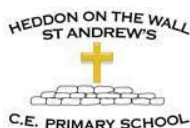
However, we will be operating social distancing as far as possible between different bubbles in School.

Your child's class teacher, and any teaching assistants assigned to your child's bubble, will not practice social distancing as this would make teaching basic skills such as reading and writing impossible. However, teachers will avoid prolonged close contact with individual pupils and will also administer help side-by-side rather than face to face.

All staff and visitors will be asked to adhere to strict social distancing guidelines between adults and other children in school.

Teachers and teaching assistants can work across different bubbles in School and this is laid out in the Government guidance:

*'All teachers and other staff can operate across different classes and year groups in order to facilitate the delivery of the school timetable... Where staff need to move between classes and year groups, they should try and keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can, ideally 2 metres from other adults. Again, we recognise this is not likely to be possible with younger children and teachers in primary schools can still work across groups if that is needed to enable a full educational offer.'*



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### **How will classrooms be set up to reduce the infection risk?**

Early Years classrooms will return to their normal set up and the reduction of risk will be through the planned use of resources sanitised between use. Children will be taught about good hand hygiene and playing safely together. The Year 1 classroom will also operate like this to support children's transition into Key Stage 1 in the first few weeks of the new term. There will be lots of opportunities for outdoor learning.

In other year groups, children will be seated shoulder to shoulder with their work partner. Desks will be placed facing forward and children will not be sitting in groups or facing each other in the classroom. Desks will be spaced apart as far as space allows.

### **Will there be additional cleaning and hygiene measures in place?**

Yes. We will continue to ensure children wash / sanitise their hands on entry into school and regularly throughout the day, always before eating. Desks will be frequently sanitised and all shared areas (such as toilets) will be cleaned during the course of the day. We will continue to reinforce the importance of good respiratory hygiene and the importance of hand washing.

Each classroom has its own supply of hand sanitiser therefore we would ask that children do not bring in their own hand sanitiser from home. If your child is unable to use either hand sanitiser or the soap in School due to skin irritation you will need to provide a suitable alternative for your child to use in School.

Children will be actively encouraged to take part with the cleaning and hygiene processes in their classrooms wiping down desks and equipment.

### **Will children be sharing resources?**

Yes. It is impossible for school to offer a full and engaging curriculum without children being able to share resources. Children will be given their own stationery to use and this will not be shared (e.g. pencils, pens, scissors, rubber and paintbrush). Other learning resources will be cleaned after use (e.g. PE and Science equipment) and always before being used by a different bubble.

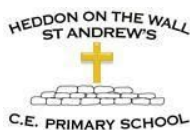
Please could we ask that children do not bring their own stationery or pencil cases.

### **Will children have to wear School uniform?**

Yes. Children will be asked to return to school in full uniform. A uniform list for the School can be found on the School website. Please can we particularly ask that children do not wear any jewellery (including earrings) in School with the exception of a wrist watch. All items of uniform must be named.

In order to maximise ventilation in classrooms and the Hall all external windows must remain open regardless of the weather outside.

On PE days, children should come to school wearing their PE kit and school jumper (see below). You will find out when PE is for your child's class in September.



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## What will happen on the School yard during playtimes?

Children will have playtimes with their peers from their Key Stage bubble in clearly defined areas supervised by staff from their Key Stage bubble. Each Key Stage bubble will have their own box of playground equipment to use. They will not be able to play with children from other Key Stage bubbles in School until we are satisfied that we no longer need to operate with additional COVID Risk Assessments in place.

## What time will School start and finish and where do I drop off and pick up?

In order to protect staff, children and parents the School will continue to operate a staggered start / end to the School day. Please **do not** arrive more than 5 minutes before your child's drop off or collection time.

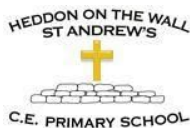
We would ask that you be patient while we operate the staggered start and finishes to enable us to get both children and adults in and out of the School site safely.

The access and one way systems implemented in the Summer term will remain in place for September along with the waiting points for each classroom. As prior to the Summer there will remain no access through the School site.

Class	Start Time	End Time	Access Point
Nursery	9.00am	3.30pm Collections from 3.20pm	Studio Door via Park Gate
Reception	8.50am	3.10pm	Studio Door via Park Gate
Key Stage 1 (Year 1 & Year 2)	8.50am	3.10pm	Classroom doors via Main Road Gate
Lower Key Stage 2 (Year 3 & Year 4)	9.00am	3.20pm	Classroom doors via Main Road Gate
Upper Key Stage 2 (Year 5 & Year 6)	9.00am	3.20pm	Main Entrance via ramp

To limit the number of adults on site, siblings will be dropped off / picked up with the youngest child.

If you need to speak to your child's class teacher please could you contact them via the School Office as catching staff at the start and end of the day will limit the smooth flow of parents around the one way system.



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Children will still be expected to wash / gel their hands upon arrival and prior to departure.

Access to the Office will be as it was prior to the Summer and we would ask you to make initial contact via telephone or email rather than in person.

### **Will there be School lunches available?**

Yes, however, we will still be unable to operate a full kitchen service due to the restrictions on children mixing in communal areas. We will however be offering a choice of a hot or cold school lunch (there will always be a vegetarian option). Menus will be specifically selected so that they meet the required nutritional standards but they will both be served as “grab and go” options. Menus will be available for parents to see in advance but will consist of a cold packed lunch option with a choice of sandwiches, or a hot option such as pasta and sauce. All choices will be served with vegetable or salad items, fruit, a dessert and additional items such as crisps or crackers.

The School is in discussion with DOLCE, our School Meal provider and Mrs. Champion in the School Kitchen to try and increase the options available for School Meals and to ensure nutritional standards and value for money for parents are being met. I hope to be able to write to you soon with further details of progress made in this area.

In order to avoid children having to sit face to face and mixing in communal areas some children will be eating their lunch in their classrooms.

Early Years and Upper Key Stage 2 will eat their lunch in the Hall. Each class will have their own tables at each side of the Hall. Children will be sitting shoulder to shoulder and will be facing the same way. All tables and chairs will be thoroughly cleaned between these two sittings and all windows will be open to maximise ventilation. Each Key Stage bubble will have their own allocated lunchtime supervisor.

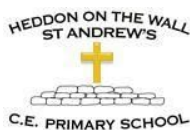
As we are having to plan specifically for numbers of children taking school meals, we will not be able to operate children opting in and out of school meals across the week as we have done in the past. Parents will be asked to decide if they wish their child to have a school lunch or bring a packed lunch from home. If you wish to change, we will ask for a week's notice so we can make the necessary changes to arrangements. From September, to support our wider menu, lunches will revert to the normal cost of £2.25. Universal infant school meals and those on free school meals will not be charged but must order their lunches in advance.

If your financial circumstances have changed you may qualify for Free School meals entitlement. I would urge parents to check this out, even if your child is already receiving universal free school meals (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) as we can offer further financial support, for example, help with visit and club costs etc.

Further information can be found at [Free School Meal Information](#).

### **Will the Out of School Club be open in September?**

The Out of School Club will be operating in September.



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Children will be allocated a designated area where they will be with their Key Stage bubble in Out of School Club. Early Years children will remain in the Nursery while Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2 will have an allocated area within the School Hall. Social distancing will be maintained between bubbles but not within bubbles.

In order to provide the provision staff will work across these bubbles. The School is pleased to let you know that we have employed additional staff for the Out of School Club to maximise the number of places while ensuring that the children are safe.

For Out of School Club in the morning the children will no longer be able to help themselves to food for their breakfast. Food will be prepared by a member of staff, wearing appropriate PPE, and brought to the child. Children will be served and will eat in their own designated Key Stage bubble.

### **Will there be School buses in operation?**

School buses will be running as they have been for the duration of the lockdown.

Northumberland County Council has written to all parents whose children use School Transport outlining the protective measures to be implemented. The letter can be viewed [here](#).

Children aged 11 and over must wear a face mask or covering on School Transport and it is optional for children under this age.

### **Will you still be offering online home-schooling support?**

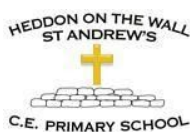
No. Unless we are asked to go back into a local lockdown, or groups of children cannot attend due to living in local locked down areas, we will not be offering home-schooling support.

School attendance will be statutory from September and we will be looking forward to seeing all children in school.

The School has taken on board comments from parents about home-schooling during lockdown and is working to develop suitable contingency plans for online learning in the event the Government's Track and Trace programme advises individual or family groups to isolate, or in the case of further local or National lockdowns.

### **Will children be allowed to bring reading books home?**

Home reading is an essential part of learning to read. It allows children to practice their skills regularly and builds their confidence and fluency. Whilst online reading has been a great way to keep children learning during lock down, we value children reading real books. Our Risk Assessment is built around balancing risks with adverse effects on children's development. We will therefore return to encouraging home reading and sending reading books home with your children and ask that you send them in daily with their book bags and home reading log/school planner. Books will be sent home at the beginning of the week and returned to School at the end of the week for changing. Changing books will be carefully managed and returned books will be put out of circulation for 48 hours over the weekend before being sent home with another child. We will also ask parents and children to take good hygiene measures whilst handling books at home and school - washing hands before and after reading and coughing or sneezing into a tissue.



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If you would prefer your child did not bring reading books home from School, and you would like to be allocated books online, please talk directly to your child's class teacher in September and they will make arrangements with you.

### **How do I contact the School?**

Please can we ask that you only use the School Office in an emergency. If you do need to get in contact with us, please call our School number 01661 853350 or via email:

[admin@heddon-school.co.uk](mailto:admin@heddon-school.co.uk)

If your child requires medication (prescribed by a doctor only), you must complete a medicine form from the Office. This will then be signed off by myself in order for the member of staff within your child's bubble to administer the medication.

In terms of communicating with you all communication will now be electronic via SchoolComms and the School website. Hardcopies of letters and information will be available upon request from the School Office.

### **Will children be able to carry things to School such as Book Bags and packed lunch boxes?**

Yes, although we ask you to make sure what is carried between home and School are essential items only such as reading books, home school reading records, homework and water bottles (we are no longer able to provide children without a water bottle a drink in a cup). We have reduced what is needed to be brought into school by allowing your child to come into school dressed in their PE kits on PE days.

Children can still bring in their own healthy snack but this must be in a sealed bag / box.

Please help us to reduce the infection risk by ensuring items are cleaned when being carried between home and school.

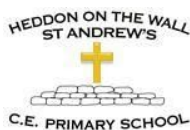
### **Will there be any other changes to the way school operates?**

Unfortunately we will not be able to hold our regular Autumn Term events, such as our Welcome Service, Harvest Festival or Parents' Evenings, in the usual way. However, we are becoming very creative with alternative ways of doing things and I know the staff will already be coming up with ideas on how we can celebrate with you.

### **What happens if a child becomes ill or tests positive for COVID-19?**

If a child becomes ill and displays symptoms of Coronavirus (a cough and high temperature) they will be isolated from other children with a member of staff who will be wearing full PPE. Parents will be asked to collect them immediately. Parents will be asked to book a COVID test and the school will also alert Northumberland County Council of a potential case. The [link to book a test](#) is on the School website front page.

Once the test has been completed and results are received, the child can return to school if negative and they are feeling better. If a positive case is confirmed, the local Health Protection Team will work with the school to track and trace any contacts and they will provide definitive



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advice to parents and the school of the necessary next steps (e.g. who will need to isolate). In the case of a positive test result the child concerned must isolate in line with Government guidance.

The School has a small number of home testing kits available for parents who are unable to take their child to a testing centre in the event of them displaying symptoms.

**Please do not bring your child into school if they are experiencing symptoms.**

### **How will the building work affect the running of the School?**

The work to replace the School roof has been ongoing during the Summer holidays and is well ahead of schedule.

The work on the roof in Early Years, the School Kitchen and Key Stage 2 has been completed.

Works continue on Key Stage 1 and the School Hall. Roof replacement has been completed and the remaining works are around laying the final coverings meaning that it is safe for children to use these spaces while these works are completed.

There may be some noise disturbance during these works but the contractors will work closely with the School to keep this to a minimum.

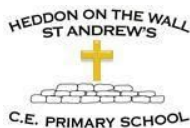
The builder's compound is self-enclosed within the School grounds away from children. A scaffolding bridge from their compound will allow contractors access to the roof away from children and other adults on site.

Access to the site will be as normal and as detailed in this document.

### **How long will these COVID-19 arrangements be in place?**

As we move through the term we will be maintaining a watchful eye on both the risk and spread of the Coronavirus and following Government guidelines. Ensuring children feel happy and safe in school, and that they are learning and progressing well, will constantly be our driving aim. We will always balance this alongside risk when we face new challenges.

We do not know how long we will have to operate with these additional measures in place but we will continue to follow and adhere to the guidance from Public Health England. I do not think we will see "normal" operations in school during the Autumn Term, but the children will very quickly adapt to the new norm, as they have already shown us over the last few weeks of the Summer term.



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