

## Parent FAQs

How will you make sure that children are kept socially distant?

The government guidance states:

Class or group sizes

**We know that**, unlike older children and adults, **early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff**. In deciding to bring more children back to early years and schools, we are taking this into account. Schools should therefore work through the hierarchy of measures set out above:

- **avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms**
- **frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices**
- **regular cleaning of settings**
- **minimising contact and mixing**

It is still important to reduce contact between people as much as possible, and we can achieve that and reduce transmission risk by ensuring children, young people and staff where possible, **only mix in a small, consistent group and that small group stays away from other people and groups**.

This is what our 'bubble strategy has been based around. We will also reorganise the classroom tables to aid the distancing of pupils. This will include using tables in our Nursery and Reception classes. Children will then have their own little work places to help them keep their distance from other pupils. School adults will also support this process and explain the reasons why, using age appropriate stories.

How have the bubbles been decided and will they consider friendship groups?

In nursery, the bubbles will be allocated based on the sessions the children attend. For F2, Year 1 and Year 6, they will be allocated by simply using alphabetical order. This has been chosen for two main reasons:

- It allows us to easily coordinate sibling groups;
- It can be shared with parents via one communication to all, rather than having to do individual conversations with each family. With the extremely tight deadlines we are working with, this was chosen as the most effective strategy.

What is the school's contingency should a pupil or member of staff become symptomatic And/or test positive for COVID-19?

We would follow the guidance from Public Health England (PHE). The member of staff would be self-isolated; the children in the bubble and / or any other persons who may have been in contact will be informed and requested to self-isolate for the appropriate amount of time. We would then take any actions recommended to us by PHE.

Will all the staff be tested before opening?

We do not plan to test all of our staff prior to opening. Staff are clear about the symptoms and should any member of staff experience the symptoms then we will follow the self-isolation protocol and staff will then be tested before returning to work.

After being in lockdown for around 2 months what is the point when everything else is closed, to send children to school? Is children's safety and well-being not as big of an issue as what is going on?

Highwood is planning for the reopening of schools based on the directive given to schools by the government. These plans are being put in place as part of my professional duty. The decision about whether your child/ren return to school still remains entirely yours. PSHE lessons will be a priority on the pupils return, focused around dealing with the current situation.

**Will there be any extra support available to children normally in the Orchard if they are grouped with their mainstream peers?**

Yes. We will not be running the Orchard (Our speech and Language Resource) due to the fact that bubbles would mix during any reintegration into the children main classes. Additional support will be allocated to the classes, although this may not be with the staff members the children are used to be supported by in The Orchard. The NHS staff are not due to be in school to offer the speech therapy and we will be unable to mix bubbles to provide the specialist and integrated provision the children are used to. Mr Bevan will be able to talk through, in about, how we plan to prioritise certain aspects of the EHCPs.

**Are you planning to run breakfast or after school clubs if the school reopens?**

No. Our Breakfast Club and After School Club will not be running due to the simple fact that bubbles would mix. All money will remain in credit on your accounts. We will release the booking details to parents in good time for when we plan to reopen – This is not likely to happen during the phased return.

**What if I have a child in a priority year group and another child whose class is not returning? How will this help me return to work?**

If you are a keyworker and are expected to return to work, all children in no-priority year groups will be able to join our Keyworker provision. If you are not a Keyworker, then we will not be offering provision for children in years 2, 3, 4 or 5 until guidance from the government reflects a wider opening strategy.

**How will lunch be organised? Staffing? Hot dinners? Play areas?**

Lunch – We are in communication with Caterlink as to what they are able to provide. School dinners may come in the form of a packed lunch that can be ordered daily. If their staffing capacity allows, then hot dinners may become available. During the first week back, we are going to trial the children eating in their classrooms to minimise the movement around the school. If this is successful then we will continue with this strategy. If not, we will look to stagger lunches in the hall spaces we have access to.

Staffing – Where possible, we will aim to have 2 members of staff per bubble so that they can cover each other's break and lunch time. This will be with a combination of teachers and support staff, although it may be different staff than the children are used to working with.

Play areas – each bubble will have a designated play area marked by coloured cones on the field or playground (or a combination of both). They will play with the children in their bubble with staff supporting them to keep a safe distance apart. A photo of the plan will be sent out with information on bubble groupings.

**Will you provide each child with their own equipment to avoid cross-contamination?**

Yes. They will have their own pack, in a zip wallet on their desk.

Will there be a wash box for any shared equipment so they can be cleaned between pupils?

Any equipment that is used will be cleaned before it is used by another group. Additional cleaning and hygiene products have been purchased and installed in each classroom.

Will each bubble have their own toilet and sink area to avoid contact between bubbles?

We do not have enough toilets to allocate 1 per bubble, although the children will be allocated to a toilet to limit movement around the building. Children will be reminded of all personal hygiene procedures and the importance of hand washing in the way we did before lockdown. Staff from each bubble will supervise to avoid mixing and make sure that children are at a safe distance.

Will they still do a full school day? (with staggered start and end times)

Yes. Our staggered start and pick up time will be as follows:

	Start Time	Pick up Time
EYFS	8.45am	2.45pm
Year 1	9.00am	3.00pm
Year 6	9.15am	3.15pm

I would urge parent to arrive promptly; follow the one-way system and leave the site in good time. The classrooms will be open, so that children can go directly into the rooms rather than waiting outside. If sibling groups have different drop off times or pick up times we will accommodate this, so that parents don't have to spend longer on site than is necessary.

If I have to return to work before the end of the Summer school term, will we be able to return our child to school? If so, how would be contact you and what notice will we have to give?

Yes. If circumstances change then you can contact the office to inform us.

Can I choose which days I send my child in for?

No. If you plan to send your children back on their allocated days, then we would expect to see them in school on all of those days. In the first week this would be 2 days (Either Monday, Tuesday or Thursday, Friday). In the second week it would be for 4 days (Monday to Thursday). Parental decisions will indicate a choice to return to school and not to use the school for flexible childcare. Any change to this would need to be communicated and agreed with the school.

Will children need uniform? Will we need to provide a PE kit?

We will not expect children to come in uniform – staff dress code will also be relaxed. The guidance recommends clean clothes for each day to minimise the risk of transmission – I think this is easier to achieve in non-school uniform. We would expect the children to arrive in appropriate clothes so that they don't limit activities the children can be involved with. Comfortable clothes will also allow them to take part in physical activities without the need to change into PE Kit. This would include sensible footwear such as trainers or pumps.

Can you provide us with images or video footage of the space(s) and school set up which will be used for my child in advance of 1st June? We would like to show her these in order to help prepare her for the changes.

Yes. Our plan is to take photos of the areas and examples of the signage to help prepare children. This will be done as soon as possible, but please bear with us as many of the areas and signage are still being prepared. They have all been ordered and will be installed on arrival.

Will the children be with their normal teachers? And will the nursery children be doing their normal activities or will it all be different?

Nursery provision will look different to normal and dependent on the number of bubbles we create, some children will not be with their class teacher. The day will consist of more structured activities with no free-flow between to the two areas in the setting.

It is not possible to have all children with their class teacher due to us limiting the group sizes to 15. Some children may be with a different teacher as a result of splitting classes to aid social distancing.

The bubbles that you propose still seem like a big number, how will you ensure nursery children will follow social distancing rules?

The bubble size of 15 is based on guidance from the government. Please see the very first FAQ answer as to how we will minimise the risk rather than guarantee social distancing measures. We do not envisage all pupils returning, so the number in each bubble will potentially be lower than 15.

Not clear about what they are going to do in nursery as in normal scenario they freely roam around.

The children will not be free flowing between each room in the setting, but will have access to the outside areas on a rota basis with other Nursery bubbles. Children will still have the opportunity to take part in learning activities similar to what they are used to: junk modelling, painting, building, story time etc. but these will more likely be adult lead activities that children take part in all at the same time. They will each have resources to use and they will all be cleaned prior to finishing.

Will you be taking children's temperature as they arrive into nursery?

No. It will be the responsibility of the parents to make sure their children are well enough to come to school. If we see a child looking ill during the school day, our normal first aid procedures will be used, which does include taking temperatures. If your child has a temperature they will be sent home immediately. We would then expect families to follow the self-isolation protocol that has been in place during the lockdown.

June 1<sup>st</sup> seems too soon to be returning to school, especially when there are younger siblings i.e. new-borns at home who could be at risk if something is caught at school.

It remains **parental choice entirely** as to whether you send your children to school on the proposed return date. We are planning for a June 1<sup>st</sup> return based on the government directive. If the 5 tests that the government have set out are not met then they may change their advice to schools. This is not a date that Highwood has decided, but a date that we have to plan for nonetheless.

Will there be provision for SEN/ 1:1 support? Thank you

Where possible, yes. This is all dependent of the staffing capacity available to me. We will look to replicate, as best we can, the support that is usually in place. It will not be the same as our normal provision, but the children will receive support.

We are really impressed with the plans put in place by the school and have every faith in Highwood delivering them. But how do staff feel about it? If staff feel uncomfortable reopening we would want their preference to take precedence.

Staff are professionals and are committed to doing their best for the school. I have surveyed them in the same way I have surveyed parents and have produced FAQs based on their questions. Many will be getting advice from their unions, as I am sure you have seen in the media, but at this stage I have almost full capacity to plan the reopening other than those who are shielding based on government guidance.

I'm not sure how we can guarantee transmission of virus to the children or to any other vulnerable people at home through these kids.

Like with any risk we cannot guarantee anything – our focus has been to minimise the risks. With this information, then parents have to make the choice that best suits their family.

If children are not in school, will there still be work for them to do?

Yes, our online activities and daily challenges will continue. However, these may look different with the potential of different teachers planning and responding to them.

Would I be able to change my decision later in the term? Possibly when other year groups start to return? Or when I have more information from my workplace?

As the national picture changes, with infection rates increasing or decreasing, then I accept that parents will review their decisions. My only request is that parents do not use the school as flexible childcare and pick and choose certain days. If a decision is made for health reasons, then of course, parents can change their minds – I just wouldn't expect that to happen multiple times in a short period of time.

When will we know days/ times that children will be in school.

Once I have had chance to analyse all the potential pupil numbers and staff availability, we will be able to finalise our plans. My aim is to have that complete by the end of this week at the very latest.

I work on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. My child has been attending school during the lockdown period as I am a key worker. Will the bubble system affect the provision for my child?

In this scenario, the child would remain with the keyworker group all week due to our reopening plan for priority year groups offering Monday to Thursday. To avoid mixing bubbles, we would still be able to provide the flexibility you need, it would just be with your child joining the keyworker bubble rather than the class group bubble.

Will they be learning the curriculum or is this ad hoc teaching or creative play?

The government have prioritised year groups due to specific reasons. For example, Year 6s have been included due to them transitioning to secondary school. Their learning will need to help this process, whilst also catering for their mental health and wellbeing. The timetable may not resemble the usual school timetable, but that does not mean that curriculum lessons will not be factored into the provision.

Can children wear face masks?

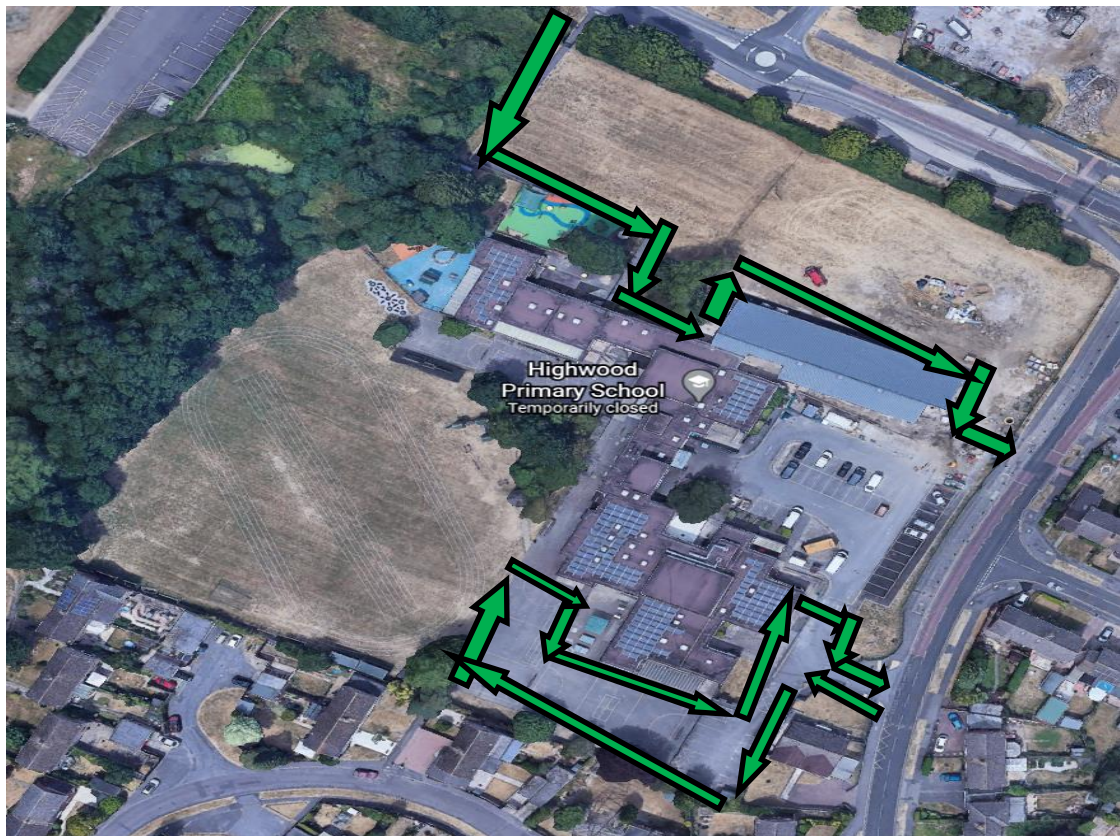
The government do not recommend the use of face masks, but if parents want to provide them then children will be allowed to wear them.

We would like to know how quickly you will resume full classes of kids and back to the full working week as I'm concerned as my ethnic group is more at risk at dying from the virus?

I don't have the answer to this, as we are being directed by the government. The government's initial aim is to have all year groups back for one month before the summer holidays. I can't see how this will work as the bubble system being used to help social distancing requires more teaching spaces and double the number of adults. If there is a wider opening, then the social distancing rules would need to be completely relaxed in order for us to cater for more pupils.

How will drop-offs and pickups work?

See map:



- The school will operate a one-way system as shown by the arrows. This will be enforced irrespective of which is the easiest gate for parents to access.
- Please see the questions above for the staggered start times.
- We ask that only one parent access the site to drop off, and where possible, no other siblings accompany parents unless they are in school as well.
- All classrooms will have social distancing markers in case it is required.

- Senior staff will be around to help direct people around the one-way system (it will also be sign posted)
- At pick up times, the same one-way system will be in effect. Staff will be outside and will use walkie talkies on your arrival to inform the adults in the bubble and hopefully speed up the process – this should limit the amount of time parents are on site.

I paid April's wraparound fees in-advance, will the payment be reflective on the account and show no deductions in April and move it to the days when my child returns in June?

Yes.

My child has high anxiety about returning to school. What can I do to reassure her?

We will share photographs of the setting to help with that process. I would also advise using the year group email addresses and then the class teacher can phone to speak to you and your child.

Will the school be asking attending children to maintain limited contact outside of school to maintain the integrity of the bubbles?

This is something I can ask in my parent communication but not something I can enforce.

Will work be assigned for days school is not open? If so how much parent support will be required as this can be a challenge if working full time?

Work will be set in exactly the same way that it is now. Parents are doing a great job and I would just encourage you to do whatever is possible to support learning at home.

Do they need to take a packed lunch?

Possibly. We are still in discussion with Caterlink, our school meal providers, to see what they are offering. Once this is confirmed I will inform parents.