



St John's Highbury Vale C of E Primary School

Conewood Street, London N5 1DL

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Head of School: Mrs Lindsey Hodgson

Executive Head: Mrs Tonnie Read

Friday 3rd September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you have had a wonderful summer and have managed to stay safe and well. I am writing today to inform you all of the new protocol the school will be following this year regarding COVID-19, and the changes this has to school.

I am so pleased that we are able to go ahead as planned and have all children returning to school on Monday 6th September via the main entrance of the school on Conewood Street. During the last year we introduced a soft start approach to school, which we are keen to keep. This means that the school gate and each classroom, will be open from 8.45am for children to enter. We are now happy to welcome you back into the school playground in the morning and after school, however I must ask that you respect the wishes of our staff who have chosen to continue to wear face masks/visors and keep a two metre distance.

All children should be in school by 9am when the gates to the school will be closed and locked. Registers are submitted online at 9.05am, if your child arrives at school after that time, they will be marked as late.

Control Measures

Protective measures will remain in place, including practicing good hygiene, ventilation in classrooms, and regular testing of lateral flow testing of staff to keep all members of the school community safe and to minimise the risk of further disruption to the children's education.

Although the government have lifted all class and year group 'bubbles', we have decided as a school to continue for the first half term to work as two bubbles. Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will be classed as one bubble, Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 will work as another. This will mainly impact on whole school gatherings, meaning that collective worship and celebration assemblies will be carried out in two separate groups, rather than one whole.

Face coverings are no longer required for staff or visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas. However, the government 'expects and recommends' that people wear face coverings in crowded settings, unless they are exempt. Our staff will not be wearing their face covering when teaching, but some may still be wearing them whilst moving around the school and in the playground.

We suggest that you continue to make all contact with the school office via telephone or e-mail for the first half term, but if you do have to come into the building that you wear a face covering as the main office is a congested area and has little ventilation.

Testing and Self-Isolation

If a child or member of staff tests positive on a lateral flow device (LFD) test, they should self-isolate and inform the school. They should then immediately order a confirmatory PCR test to check the positive result.

If the PCR test is taken within two days and the result is negative, they can stop self-isolating (unless instructed to self-isolate for other reasons).

If the PCR test is positive (or is taken more than two days after the LFD), they must self-isolate until 10 days after the date of the LFD test. Other members of their household will also be strongly advised to do a PCR test. The governments advice is that close contacts of a confirmed case do not need to self-isolate if they are exempt (see below) unless they





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have symptoms or have tested positive. As a school, we may ask for siblings to self-isolate, depending on the situation, and in order to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with COVID-19.

Close contacts of a positive case no longer need to isolate if they meet the below criteria. Instead, they will be advised to take PCR test.

- They are fully vaccinated
- They are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- They have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- They are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Anyone with any symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive for COVID-19 must self-isolate immediately.

Positive Cases in School

If a child tests positive within school, we will send out a warn and inform letter to the parents of the children in the same class informing of the case and the need to be vigilant. We will also suggest that children within the same class are taken for a PCR test. For under-fives, a PCR test will only be advised if the positive Covid-19 case is a member of their own household. As a school it is our duty to notify Public Health of any case.

Additional Action

The local Director of Public Health may advise a setting to temporarily reintroduce some control measures if there is an outbreak. As an education setting we have been given specific thresholds to which we must work to:

- 5 children, pupils, students or staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10 day period; or
- 10% of children, pupils, students or staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period

At this point additional action will be required. This may be when we reintroduce smaller bubble groups for a temporary period to reduce mixing in the school environment. Temporarily reinstating face coverings for all staff and visitors in indoor and communal spaces. This would initially be for two weeks in the first instance, pending regular review. As a worst-case scenario, bubble groups may need to close for a short period of time and children will need to access Google classrooms, where their class teacher will provide work daily.

School ends at 3.30pm every day. You are welcome to come into the playground to collect your children, but can I please ask that you do not gather around class teachers or teaching assistants at the end of the school day. During lockdown we began to use Class Dojo as a method to communicate with class teachers, and this has been a huge success. Please continue to contact your child's class teacher via this method or through e-mail. If you wish to speak to them personally, you can arrange a telephone call or a meeting in person at a more convenient time for the teacher.

Myself, and the whole staff team are very much looking forward to having all of the children back with us on Monday, and also to having parents back in the school playground.

Yours sincerely,
Lindsey Hodgson
Head of School

