



**Billingshurst Primary School**  
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Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Firstly I hope that you have all had a very good summer, that you have all managed to enjoy some of the lovely weather and that you have all kept safe and well. I look forward to welcoming you all back to school next week.

Following my [letter to all parents and carers](#) on 15<sup>th</sup> July I am writing to update you on a few things and, hopefully, reassure you so that you will bring your children back to school next week with confidence. If you have not read the previous letter, please follow the link and make sure you understand its contents. The Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson, published an [open letter](#) to all parents last week, making it clear that the expectation is that all children will return to school. This has always been our plan and the letter I wrote to you in July sets out how we are going to do this.

The first and most vital precaution is that no-one who has [symptoms of Covid19](#) should enter the school site and I ask that you do not send your child to school if they have any of the symptoms, however mild. If anyone in your household has symptoms, please keep your child at home in the first instance and access the testing facilities to ensure you and your family are tested as soon as possible. Once a negative result is obtained your child may return to school. If the result is positive, your child will need to remain at home for 10 days (if the child is COVID positive) or 14 days if someone else in the house tests positive. Managing the health of children, staff, families and our wider community depends on everyone abiding by this.

The children will arrive at staggered time (see previous letter) and staggered finish times. I know that this may take a bit of getting used to but it will protect you and your children by ensuring that there are not too many people on site at any one time. Therefore please ensure you arrive promptly at the correct time as there is not much time between year groups arriving. If you have a child in more than one year group and have to wait in between, please go to the lower playground at the KS1 end or the lower playground at the KS2 end. These are the playgrounds located on the field. This is, again, to ensure there is little cross-over and no crowding. Children cannot be dropped off at the office at time outside of their year group arrival. I know this may cause some families some inconvenience but it is necessary to protect everyone.

If you need to come into the School Entrance to the Office, you must wear a mask. Please consider contacting us by telephone or email rather than coming into the school. No-one will be admitted without a mask to ensure the safety of staff on Reception and you will not be able to enter the building without one. We will, however, discourage children from wearing a mask and would ask you not to send your child to school with the expectation that they will wear one in school. To ensure masks are effective and not a hazard, they require careful handling and storage. Young children are very unlikely to be able to manage this and our risk assessment shows that masks would be a greater infection risk and would possibly do more harm than good. Staff are not expected to wear a mask but are allowed to if they wish because they will be able to manage the protocols of handling masks safely. Children are also not going to be in crowded communal areas in which a mask may be of benefit as in secondary schools. Their movement about the building will be limited and the staggered break and lunchtime will limit the numbers in any area at any one time.



Please would you limit what your child brings to school to their book bag and reading book/s, P.E. kit, lunch box and coat. Please do not let your child bring toys, pencil cases or items that are not necessary as these will add to the infection risk. I also ask that you do not send in shared gifts or sweets on your child's birthday as these cannot be shared.

If you need to get a message to school, please email the school office, email your child's teacher through the year group email or telephone. An urgent messages should come to the school office as teachers may only check emails daily. The blue books remain but will not be checked until the risk of COVID has diminished. Leave them in book bags so they can be located in the future when it is safe to do so.

Most of our families walk or drive to school. We continue to actively encourage you to walk or cycle but, at this time, the advice is to avoid public transport if possible.

There will be more information to come about the term at a later date. We are considering how we will manage parents meetings later on in the term and, of course, many of the normal school events will depend on the COVID situation and the guidance at the time. We will endeavour to do everything as normal but we have to be realistic that some events will not happen. We know that, very sadly, there will be no pantomime at The Hawth this year. We will wait until half term before making any decisions about festive events at the end of term (avoiding the 'word' until then!).

Obviously you may have specific circumstances that mean you have questions that you would like answered about your child returning to school. Please read the previous letter for more detail and then contact us if your question remains unanswered. I truly want all children to return to school next week and we will work with you to make that happen. Parents should be clear that the legal requirement for your child to be in education returns this September and all children in all year groups are expected to be back in school.

The updated risk assessment will be published on the school website on the Policies page by Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September. In the risk assessment you will find the protocols for dealing with confirmed COVID cases in school. In all circumstances we will follow the advice of our Health Protection Team. We will follow their advice if any partial or total closure of the school is required and I would let you know about this immediately.

If the school had to close or if your child has to isolate at home, the school curriculum will be online from 7<sup>th</sup> September so that learning will continue at home. As before, if you would be unable to access this and would prefer a printed pack we would be able to provide this. Learning will continue in the same manner as last term with access on line and access to year group emails to send work in for teachers to review. However, unless isolating or recovering from COVID, all children should be in school. On line learning is not an optional alternative to returning to school next week.

The staff and I look forward to seeing you all back next week and for the school to return to the nearest thing to normal since March. Have a lovely weekend before then.

Yours sincerely



Helen Williamson  
Headteacher

