



# BACK TO SCHOOL

Guidance for a safe return in March 2021





# MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Thanks to the Prime Minister's announcement last week, we now have a 'roadmap to freedom' and the much welcomed re-opening of schools is the first stage on that journey.

Through the course of this pandemic, we have been living through history and I have marvelled at how the Long Close community has navigated the rather featureless landscape synonymous with lockdown. The manner in which our pupils have risen to the challenge, in spite of the circumstances, has been both exceptional and warming. The role of parents and other family members – both of pupils and of staff – has been a critical success factor. Nonetheless, we will all be feeling online fatigue and the Prime Minister's announcement could not have come soon enough.

For the staff at Long Close this has, without question, been the very toughest of years. It has also been, however, the year of most professional growth. The skills the team have learnt, the dedication they have shown, and the flexibility they have demonstrated simply blow me away every day. I was so pleased to see that you recognise this too - the summary results from our recent 'voice of the parent' survey are included in this pack. The team are busy reviewing all your comments so that we can enhance our continuously evolving school improvement plans. Thank you for contributing to this: it helps us get better, every day.

Whilst we all crave this pathway to normality and to greater social freedoms, we will continue to ensure that the safety of our pupils, staff, and families frames our planning. A lot of the measures that accompany a return to school you will now be familiar with, but there is a reminder in this pack. There are a couple of new additions to the protocol around face coverings and rapid testing. Please take the time to read these sections.

We have a tumult of happiness ahead of us and I suspect all of us will appreciate a little more, the small pleasures of normal life, including the school community being back together again.

Miss Nijjar  
Headteacher

# WELCOME BACK

Our risk mitigation routines are already well established in school and so welcoming more children back through the school gates safely will draw on this prior experience. The school didn't close during this most recent lockdown, remaining open for Nursery, Key Worker and Vulnerable children.

As before, children will be placed in consistent groups - the 'bubble' concept. Groups will be kept apart where possible, and older children encouraged to keep their distance within their groups.

We are slightly staggering the formal start and finish times for the school day across different year groups in order to regulate the numbers of children and parents entering and exiting the school at the same time. The schedule for each year group is listed below.

Year group/s	Date of return	Timing of school day
Nursery	Continues	8:30am-3:30pm Early morning drop off 8:00am Sibling cover until 3:45pm
Reception	Monday 8 March	8:30am-3:30pm Early morning drop off 8:00am Sibling cover until 3:45pm
1 – 2	Monday 8 March	8.15am-3.45pm
3 - 6	Monday 8 March	8.15am-3.45pm
7 - 11	Monday 8 March	8.15am-3.45pm

# COVID TESTING

- Students in years 7 and up will be tested two times. The first of these tests will take place on Friday 5 March. The second will take place on Tuesday 9 March.
- Students must have a negative result in test 1 to join the rest of their year in class, and of course all subsequent tests must also be negative.
- After the first two tests, which will be conducted on site, students will receive test at home kits. We ask that you share your results with us, whether void, positive or negative, to help with contact tracing.
- You must give or deny your consent for your child to be tested.
- All staff will continue to be tested twice weekly.

# FACE COVERINGS

- Staff will continue to wear masks at drop off and pick up and when moving around the school site.
- Parents will continue to be required to wear masks at all times when on the school site. Any parents without a face covering (unless exempt) will not be permitted on the school site.
- There is still currently no requirement for Prep School pupils to wear masks, however should guidance change we will let you know. If you wish your child to wear a face covering on their journey to and from school then please provide a Ziploc bag to store their covering when not being worn.
- Pupils in Years 7-11, plus staff teaching in Senior School are required to wear face coverings in all locations inside the school and when moving around the site.

# Drop off and collection arrangements

	Early Years	Prep	Senior
Drop off	8.00-8.15am for pupils booked in advance for Before School Care.	8.15-8.30am	8.15-8.30am
	8.30-8.40am for pupils not booked into Before School Care		
Entrance	Main school gate	Main school gate	Pedestrian gate
Collection	3.30pm for those not in After School Care	3.45pm	3.45pm
	3.45pm for pupils with siblings in other areas of the school		
Exit	Main school gate	Main school gate	Pedestrian gate

- Pupils will be asked to make a prompt exit from the school grounds at the end of the day to avoid overcrowding.
- All parents on the school site are asked to practise social distancing when on site, ensuring that you make a prompt exit from our grounds when you have dropped off /collected your child.
- Parents should not congregate on the premises.
- **Only one adult to drop off and collect children, please.**
- Regrettably, we still cannot welcome parents into the School buildings at this time. If you wish to speak with a member of staff, please initiate this via email for a Teams or phone call at a mutually convenient time.
- **All** Senior pupils should now enter and exit the school via the pedestrian gate.

# FACE COVERINGS



Government guidance has changed on this subject and students in years 7 and up, plus staff in these year groups, now have to wear face coverings in all locations inside the school.

Please prepare by:

- Buying or making sufficient face coverings that your child is comfortable wearing
- Talk to your child about the correct way to put on, wear, and remove it
- Provide your child with a named Ziploc bag to store their covering when not being worn



50 second BBC video on wearing a face covering correctly

Wearing face coverings inside classrooms is new for our students and staff, who previously only wore them in communal areas. This change may take some getting used to, so we asked our colleagues at Cognita schools in Spain what their top tips were. They have been wearing face coverings in classrooms for months now and it's virtually part of the uniform!



*Parents should seek out size-appropriate masks that fit well – this helps students keep them over both mouth and nose.*

Vanessa Grimward, Head at ELIS Murcia in Alicante



*We've started to encourage the wearing of the thicker masks now as they are better at preventing transmission both ways.*

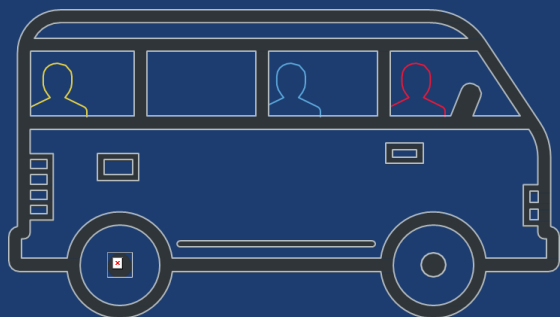
Neil Tetley, Head at Hastings School in Madrid



*Masks can get grubby and need regular changing, so bring spares. Have a mask carrier / small envelope to store mask during lunch times.*

Sarah Ebery, Head of the English Montessori School in Madrid

# REMINDERS



**Cleaning and catering will all continue with the additional measures in place to enhance the safety of our pupils, parents and staff.**

## **OUR CLEANING REGIME**

We have a robust cleaning regime throughout the school day with a focus on toilets and high-touch areas. Our cleaning hours have been extended. At the end of the day we repeat this regime and pay particular attention to the common areas of the school. On a Friday evening we do a weekly enhanced clean of all rooms in the school.

In the instance of a confirmed COVID-19 case we would do a deep clean which includes all surface areas and carpets. In all cases we use coronavirus approved disinfectants/aerosols.

Foggers (a means of spraying an antiviral disinfectant solution to surfaces) will be deployed across the school to support the enhanced cleaning.

## **PERSONAL HYGIENE**

Hand sanitiser will be available upon entering every classroom. Children will be required to wash hands or use sanitiser every time they change rooms.

## **CATERING**

The catering offer returns to relative normality this term. The kitchen will be open and producing meals. We will stagger lunchtimes to support the distancing between groups.

## **SWIMMING**

We are yet to receive updates from Windsor Leisure Centre as to when we may be able to resume lessons. We will keep you informed when we have further details. We will of course follow the guidance issues by Swim England for pool operators.

## **EQUIPMENT**

For equipment-based lessons we are following the guidance issued by the accredited bodies for schools such as Cleapss for Science, DT, and Art and AFPE for Sport. All equipment is cleaned after use.

Pupils can take books home. We continue to advise that high touch items such as pens are bought from home in a pencil case.

## **ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES**

Sports, drama, art and music continue to be a crucial part of the school experience and we intend to return these activities back into the school day as much as feasible. Many sports are now supported, drama and art can be delivered in discrete year group bubbles, and music lessons can happen provided we follow social distancing guidelines. We will continue to follow government advice as soon as it is updated.

## **BREAKFAST CLUB AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

Breakfast Club provision will be available from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> at 8.00am. After School Care will be available until 6.00pm.

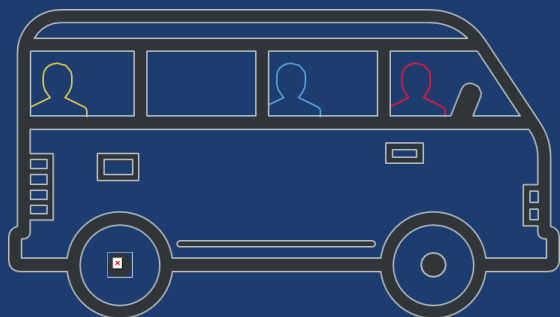
## **CLUBS**

A programme of clubs will be available for the remainder of the spring term and further details for options and booking will be shared with you separately.

## **PERIPATETIC STAFF**

In order to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, our peripatetic teachers will resume their lessons in school when we return on March 8.

# REMINDERS



## HOUSEHOLD HEALTH

- Do not send children into school if they, or any other member of the household, show any symptoms associated with Covid-19.
- Any child or member of staff who develops symptoms during the school day will be sent home immediately.

## RETURNING FROM ABROAD

- We are aware that some families will be returning to the UK from abroad over the coming days / weeks.
- Please notify us at school if this applies to you.
- It is a legal requirement to follow the quarantine rules applicable when returning to the UK from abroad.
- Please click here for the government guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control/self-isolating-when-you-arrive>
- Before your child can return to school we will require the following details:
  - Destination from which you are travelling
  - Date of flight into UK
  - Date of anticipated return to school
  - Test results for all family members (all must be negative)

## RESOURCES TO SUPPORT STUDENTS ON THE RETURN TO SCHOOL

It is understandable that some pupils may be anxious about returning to school. Please see below some useful links to support children with the return:

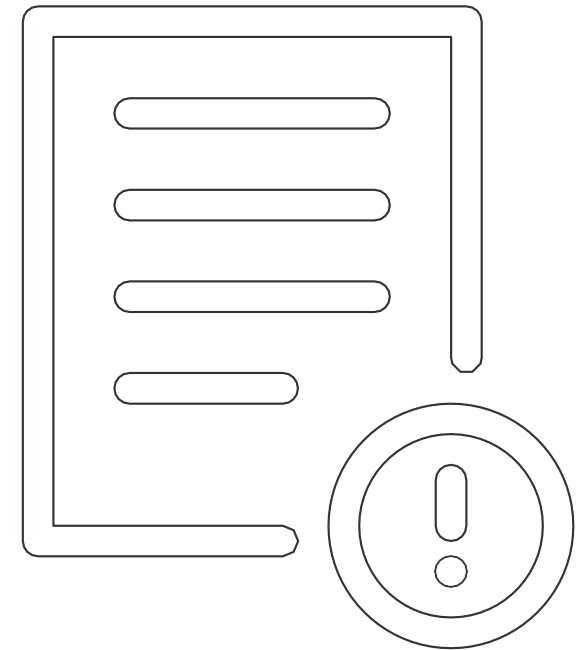
Childline: <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work/school-college/school/>

Place2Be: <https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/services-for-schools/mental-health-resources-for-schools/return-to-school-resources/>

NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/away-from-home/at-school/#coronavirus>

# SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES

1. Talk to your child about the expectations outlined in this guide – particularly senior school students around face coverings and asymptomatic testing
2. Do not send your child into school if they, or any other member of the household, show any symptoms associated with COVID-19
3. When student home testing starts parental supervision will be needed to ensure the testing is correctly carried out twice weekly, and the results observed
4. Take note of any changes to the timings of the school day for your child
5. Ensure social distancing measures at drop off and collection are followed





# Thank you for completing our annual survey

We set ourselves the ambition as a school, and as a Schools' Group, of 'being the best at getting better'. It's an ambition that we strive to infuse into everything we do.

A huge input to this ambition is the surveys we run annually – with students, parents and also employees. We will follow up with more details shortly but here is a summary of the results.



**156**  
survey  
responses

**58.4%** response  
rate this year

**- 0.4%** response rate  
compared to last year

*Average mark out of 10 for the four survey categories:*

**8.5**  
Leadership &  
school culture  
compared to **8.2** last year

**8.4**  
Teaching &  
Learning  
compared to **7.6** last year

**8.5**  
School  
operations  
compared to **6.9** last year

**8.2**  
Communication  
with parents  
compared to **8.0** last year



**Overall NPS**  
**21.8** compared to **-1.2** last year

# FAQs



## **Q: Will school uniform be required?**

Yes. We are looking forward to returning to full uniform, since scientific guidelines are not suggesting a reason to avoid this. We will continue to ask that children with PE or Games during that day attend school wearing PE kit and tracksuits, to reduce the impact of changing.

## **Q: Will the 10-day isolation of bubbles return?**

Yes, in instances of a confirmed case in a bubble this will continue to be applied for close contacts. We never like to send bubbles home, but it is a government requirement we have to follow. In these instances, we will immediately revert to our online teaching provision allowing all children to progress in their education without interruption.

## **Q: What happens if my child has a positive lateral flow test (LFT) in school?**

Students with a positive LFT result will need to self-isolate in line with the guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection: at time of writing this means they will be required to self-isolate from the date of that test plus 10 days.

If a parent then chooses for their child to have a PCR test and that test comes back negative, they will still need to maintain the self-isolation period.

If a *home* test is carried out and is positive, the child can go for a confirmatory PCR test. If the PCR test is negative they can come to school, if positive they must isolate.

## **Q: Are sports, clubs and trips returning?**

Yes, where possible. We are keen to return to 'business as usual' as much as possible, and this component of education is important.

Certain non-contact sports are approved, and clubs can generally re-start, although there are some restrictions in the latest guidance.

No educational trips are permitted yet. We keep a sharp eye on government advice on these topics as guidance changes frequently.

## **Q: What will happen with equipment?**

We ask that children bring in their own equipment and stationery since sharing will not be appropriate. In some lessons (eg Art, Computing, PE), equipment will be provided as a part of the lesson requirements. Under these circumstances, it will have been cleaned between use by other pupils.

## **Q: What is the school's approach to hand hygiene?**

We have fitted a number of non-touch hand sanitisers around the school. Pupils will be trained to use these on arrival at school and at designated breaks in the day. There will also be provision for hand washing in some classes and hand gel in others to maintain the highest standards of hygiene in these areas.

## **Q: How will social distancing work?**

We recognise that the child's age can impact on the extent to which social distancing can be achieved and is necessary. Face coverings should be worn in classrooms or during activities where social distancing cannot be maintained.

## **Q: Does my child need to bring their device from home each day?**

Pupils will not need to bring their devices into school each day. They will be instructed in advance by their teachers when the device will be required.

## **Q: What is happening with school catering?**

We will be resuming our catering provision. The team have worked hard on COVID-secure practices in the kitchens and serving area. Children will have access to a range of dinners, as per the menus which will be published soon. Pupils will eat their meals in distanced placings in the Dining Room, seated with their own bubble group.