



COVID-19 RESPONSE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

****UPDATED 2ND NOVEMBER 2020: changes in red****

Is it safe for my child to come back to school?

We know that the decision to enter a national lockdown from 5th November 2020 will cause parents and carers some concern about whether it is safe for their child to attend school.

The full government guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november>

The government has stated: '[we] will continue to prioritise the wellbeing and long-term futures of our young people and will not be closing schools, colleges or universities. It remains very important for children and young people to attend, to support their wellbeing and education and help working parents and guardians. Senior clinicians still advise that school is the best place for children to be, and so they should continue to go to school. Schools have implemented a range of protective measures to make them safe.'

Attendance has been compulsory from September 2020 for all children, so if you have any specific concerns which are not addressed in this FAQ, please do get in touch with us as soon as possible and we will work through these with you.

How does the school ensure my child avoids contact with anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19?

All staff, children, parents and carers are expected to continue to follow the government guidance around self-isolating if they show any symptoms of COVID-19:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

If someone starts displaying symptoms during the school day, the child or adult is immediately isolated in a designated area and arrangements made for them to go home. Anyone who has been in contact with the individual is notified.

We engage fully with the NHS Test and Trace process. This means that everyone in the school must:

- **Book a test if they are displaying symptoms.** Staff and pupils must not come into the school if they, or anyone in their household, have symptoms, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in school. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit
- **Provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive** for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace

- **Self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)**

We maintain good communication with parents and carers throughout this process if it arises.

What is the school doing to minimise contact and mixing of children whilst they are on site?

From September, when all 660 children returned, children have been organised into 'class bubbles' of 30 children and 'mega-bubbles' of up to 90 children - the whole year group of three classes of up to 30 children and the teachers and teaching assistants that work within them.

For most of the day, children will not normally mix outside their 'class bubble' but we can only manage certain times of the day if we allow some contact across the larger 'mega-bubbles' - the year group. These times include drop off and collection; break time; and lunchtime. We plan movement around the school carefully so that year groups can avoid mixing at transition times, for example when moving from the classroom to the dining hall via school corridors.

Whenever a shared space is used by a year group, such as the hall or the dining room, it is cleaned by wiping down primary contact surfaces before the next year group uses it.

For the most part, staff are organised to work within the year group they are deployed to and we avoid staff working across year groups wherever possible. However, there will be occasions where staff have to work across year groups to maintain safe, full time education on site for all children. This could include where classes need to be covered; or where emergency support is needed at short notice. Some staff who provide support for individual children with SEND will also have to work across year groups to maintain their support. In these situations, we do everything we can to implement additional protective measures to limit the risk of cross transmission between groups of children.

Is my child be expected to stay 2m from every other child and adult once they are in their class or their year group?

No. In their guidance, the government has recognised that complete social distancing is not possible with 30 young children in a classroom for the whole day. Children are however encouraged to minimise direct physical contact with other children.

How will my child arrive at school and leave at the end of the day to minimise contact and observe social distancing?

Below, there is a chart showing how children arrive at school and leave at the end of the day to ensure there is as little contact between the year groups and social distancing can be observed.

Children should only come to school with one adult.

It is absolutely essential that parents and carers do not wait around on or near the school site before or after drop off. **This is even more critical during periods of national lockdown. The government has stated that during these times, 'we can only visit outdoor public places with the people we live with, your support bubble, or 1 person from another household.'** Staff will therefore politely remind groups of parents to disperse if they are observed congregating at the start or end of the day.

Parents with children in several different locations need to think through how you could work this to minimise your movement around the site.

Year 6 children (who from September will be right at the top of the upper building) should arrive at 8.40am **via the Greydells Road gate**. We would encourage children to walk to school independently, but if this is not possible, **please can we ask that you do not park in the close as this will become congested.** *Please look at our Facebook page where we have posted a video explaining these arrangements more clearly.*

Year Group	Location	Start time	Entrance	Where do I queue?	Exit	End time
Nursery	Nursery classrooms (AM sessions)	8.30	From 3rd Nov: Main gate to lower site off of public footpath	Down the path, keeping right, 2m distance and into Nursery through side gate.	Out through Nursery gate onto Pound Avenue	11.30
	Nursery classrooms (PM sessions)	12.30	Nursery gate	Down the nursery path, keeping left, 2m distance	Out through Nursery gate, keeping left	3.30
Reception	Reception classrooms	8.50 to 9.00	Main gate to lower site off of public footpath	Down the path, round the playground, keeping left, 2m distance	Out through reception outside area and the new gate onto the public footpath	3.10 to 3.20
Year 1	Year 1 classrooms	8.50 to 9.00	New gate opposite Pike End	Across the field and round the back of the Year 1 block	Gate near the preschool	3.10 to 3.20
Year 2	Year 2/3 block	8.40 to 9.00	New Year 2/3 double gates	Along the main concourse, round the Year 2/3 playground, 2m distance	The new pond gate	3.00 – 3.15pm
Year 3	Year 2/3 block		New Year 2/3 double gates	Along the main concourse, round the Year 2/3 playground, 2m distance	The new pond gate	
Year 4	Year 4 classrooms	8.40 to 9.00	Statue gate	Do not queue – send your child straight into class via external classroom doors	Statue gate and down the concourse, keeping right	3.00 – 3.15pm
Year 5	Year 5 classrooms		Statue gate		Statue gate and down the concourse, keeping right	
Year 6	Year 6 classrooms		Statue gate or Greydells Road gate		Statue gate 3.00 – 3.15pm or Greydells Road gate 3.15pm	

What is the school doing to ensure there is frequent hand washing and good respiratory hygiene practices?

All staff and children will clean their hands more often than usual – washing hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and drying them thoroughly.

Hand sanitiser is available around the school in frequently accessed areas, such as the school office hatches and staffrooms.

We also ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach, ensuring there are plenty of tissues available, and lidded bins which are frequently emptied.

How is the school ensuring classrooms are well ventilated?

There is increasing evidence that keeping indoor spaces well ventilated can significantly reduce the risk of transmission of the virus.

All staff have therefore been instructed to ensure that windows are kept open slightly during teaching time, and opened more fully at break times to exchange the air.

We will be doing our best to heat the building but the effectiveness of the school heating is likely to be compromised with all the windows open. As we approach the winter months, this is likely to mean that children and staff will need to wear extra layers of clothing to stay warm during the school day.

Please can you therefore make sure that your child comes to school with appropriate layers of clothing in line with normal school uniform expectations. If your child 'feels the cold' particularly, you might want to provide them with thermal underclothing.

What additional cleaning is the school be doing?

We have an enhanced cleaning schedule throughout the week including frequently used surfaces being cleaned more regularly during the day.

Staff have access to cleaning materials to use in their classrooms and workspaces.

In the event of the confirmed case, additional deep cleans will be undertaken.

Does my child have to wear school uniform?

Yes. Wearing uniform is an important part of getting your child into a normal school routine.

Children need a PE kit as usual, including suitable clothing for outdoor PE as the halls will not be used.

In the Early Years and Year 1, children will be allowed to come to school in their PE kit on the days they have PE. In all other year groups, children should come into school in school uniform and will get changed here just for the PE lesson.

Will my child have to sit at a desk all day, facing forward?

Children in the Early Years should not be expected to sit facing forward at desks all day. We believe attempting to implement this would have a negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing and would prevent them accessing their full entitlement to the early years curriculum.

Children in Key Stage 1 & 2 are equally entitled to a curriculum which engages them through a full range of individual, group and whole class activity. The furniture in the classroom will be organised flexibly to support this approach and to support children in reconnecting with their peers socially and academically.

In the dining room, we will space children out as much as possible and remind children to eat carefully and considerately. They will be encouraged to enjoy the social aspects of mealtime and to interact with their friends by facing each other and talking to each other.

Will staff, or my child have to wear a face covering or other PPE (personal protective equipment)?

Government guidance is that adults and children are not required to wear PPE in primary schools, unless for intimate care such as nappy changing and first aid. This is no different to what we would normally expect staff to wear; gloves and an apron. If a child/adult were to have suspected COVID, then any staff member supporting them would wear additional protective equipment.

You may need to wear a face covering for the journey to and from school. We would ask that these be taken home to dispose of, once you have come onto site. If washable masks are used, these need to be kept in a named plastic sealed bag.

Parents, carers and visitors **MUST** wear a face covering if they come onto the school site, including for drop off and collection, or into any of the school buildings for any reason. Staff will politely remind you if you are observed without a face covering.

We know a small number of parents, carers and visitors are exempt from wearing a face covering due to medical reasons. We are aware of most of these circumstances already. If you are exempt and you don't think we are aware of the reasons, please could you email admin@fairlands.herts.sch.uk to let us know your particular circumstances and we will get in touch.

My child has special educational needs, and/or a disability. How do you support them through your COVID response?

We know some children might struggle with the protective arrangements which are in place. We will be talking to you about the practical implications of these changes to their routine and discussing how we might overcome those barriers.

We will review all health care plans and individual risk assessments with you and this will include talking about how they might be impacted by our protective measures.

Where children have had 1:1 or group support from an adult, we aim to provide this full offer.

If you have any specific worries or concerns, please contact your child's teacher or the SENCO, Emma Verlander to discuss these emma.verlander@fairlands.herts.sch.uk

What are children learning about whilst they are at school?

We deliver a full, broad and balanced curriculum offer, including the delivery of all areas of learning in the early years and all national curriculum subjects in Years 1 to 6.

We also know that some children might be anxious about coming back to school and need support with their personal, social and emotional development. Our Jigsaw curriculum 'Puzzle' for the autumn term is 'Being Me in My World' and we will make this a high profile to help children reconnect with being back at school. Through their Jigsaw lessons, there will be plenty of opportunities for children talk about their experiences, worries and feelings and teachers will address issues sensitively as they arise.

Will you continue to provide remote learning for children who are not attending school on site?

If children are not attending school due to clinical or public health advice, we will offer the full curriculum through our quality remote learning offer, published on our school website.

This includes all scenarios, from where an individual child is self-isolating, through to full school closure as part of a full national lockdown.

Children would ideally have access to a quiet space and their own laptop at home in order to access this.

We know this is a challenge. Please be open with us about how it is going and let your child's class teacher know if there are any problems which we might be able to help with.

Please also be aware that providing quality remote learning is a huge challenge for teachers, especially if alongside they are continuing to teach other children face to face, or provide childcare for key worker children. Please work with us to get the best possible outcomes for the children.

Are there swimming lessons and trips?

For the time being, we are not running swimming lessons or residential visits, in line with government guidance. We keep this under review and will reintroduce these when our risk assessments allow.

One of the core threads of our curriculum is about providing 'inspiring contexts' to make learning as fun and exciting as possible. Teachers are thinking creatively about how to deliver our usual menu of other trips, visits and visitors as much as possible. Each of these will be risk assessed thoroughly before they go ahead.

Do you provide breakfast and after school club?

Yes. Our breakfast club and after school club provision are running as normal.

Information about booking places can be found on the school website or from the school office.

Parents access to school site

Unfortunately access to the school site continues to be limited to briefly dropping off and collecting children; prior appointments and emergencies only.

The school offices is therefore largely closed to parents/carers except for the following circumstances:

- to drop off or collect medicine
- if a parent/carer is contacted to collect a child in an emergency
- for parents/carers attending a pre-arranged meeting

If you need to come to the hatch to speak to someone in the school office, you MUST wear a face covering.

If you need to contact the school, please use one of the following channels:

- Email admin@fairlands.herts.sch.uk for general enquiries, parentforum@fairlands.herts.sch.uk with feedback or ideas or a direct contact if you have one
- Call the school on 01438 351053 between 8am and 4pm (the office will be closed during half term)
- Money should be paid online using the school gateway or cash and cheques should be sent in an envelope with the child's name and the purpose clearly marked.

All visitors to the school will need to supply their mobile phone number in order to support with the NHS Test & Trace process.

How do parent consultations and meetings take place?

We keep this under review, based on the latest government guidance.

At present, we will only hold face to face meetings with parents and carers in exceptional circumstances. Wherever, possible, meetings will take place via telephone or video conference calls.

In October 2020, consultations took place through a 1:1 telephone consultation and this worked really well.

Please note that the above arrangements are based on our current understanding of government guidance and our risk assessments as of Monday 2nd November 2020. There may be changes, which we will keep you informed about.