



Email: parentmail@hemelschool.com

Website: www.hhs.herts.sch.uk

As promised in my last normal newsletter of the year, here is our guide for parents on fully re-opening the school.

This guide only covers the absolute 'need to know' things. We have made lots of other small changes to things around the daily life of the school that may become apparent to you and your children over time. Things will also continue to change over time as we get better at running a full school during a pandemic and as the nature of the pandemic itself changes.

From today we will close down our special COVID-19 webpage and communicate with you more normally, at a hopefully less frenetic pace, via this newsletter, emails and social media - on Twitter [@HemelHSchool](https://twitter.com/HemelHSchool) and on Instagram [@HemelHempsteadSchool](https://www.instagram.com/HemelHempsteadSchool).

We have not wholesale updated our website to adapt to all the new ways of doing things described here, so please do default to this document if you see a contradiction, such as the times for the school day, for example.

May I take this opportunity to thank all of our parents, carers and the wider community for their support and understanding during this most difficult period for the school, for Hemel Hempstead and for our global community.

Neil Hassell
Headteacher

Here is what you, as parents/carers need to know:

- Most important of all:
 - Please help us to protect all of our students and staff by ensuring that you **DO NOT** let your child come to school if they have **ANY** of the following:
 - a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature).
 - a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual).
 - a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.
 - If you have any of these symptoms

- [Get a test at this link](#) to check if you have coronavirus as soon as possible.
- Stay at home and do not have visitors until you get your test result – only leave your home to have a test.
- The basic principles of our reopening:
 - Students will be taught in year group bubbles.
 - Year group bubbles will be kept separate during lessons, at break, at lunch and at entry and exit and other activities.
 - Students should keep at least 1m+ away from any other students unless they are in a classroom with their own year group.
 - Students should keep 1m+ away from any adults including their teachers and support staff.
 - If there is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 that student or staff member will stay at home and self isolate until tested, and we will work at the same time with Public Health England (or its replacement) and follow their advice, which may include:
 - Other students and staff being told to self isolate at home.
 - Other students and staff being advised to get tested.
- Return dates:
 - To allow for additional staff training, which we need on enhanced safeguarding and COVID-19 mitigation, we will have INSET days on Wednesday 2nd **AND** Thursday 3rd September - this is a change to the previously published calendar.
 - To allow us to induct students into these new ways of working we need to bring students back a few year groups at a time, so:
 - Year 7, Year 10 and Year 12 **ONLY** on Friday 4th September.
 - Year 8, Year 9, Year 11 and Year 13 **ONLY** on Monday 7th September.
 - **ALL** years every day from Tuesday 8th September.
 - This is also a change to the published calendar.
- Staggered starts and finish times:
 - The government requires us to keep year groups separate from each other in school.
 - To do this we will teach (as we always have done) in year groups, and operate strict one-way systems and zoned areas for break and lunchtime, but we will need to alter other aspects of the school day to keep year groups separate:
 - Year 7 will need to arrive at school between 0820 and 0830 and enter the site via the East gate from Heath Lane only.
 - On their first day they will be met and collected and their induction day will teach them everything they need to know for subsequent days.

- Parents should, if they wish, drop their children off away from the school gates and encourage them to walk the last few hundred metres to encourage ***Independence*** and reduce crowding around the gates.
- Year 8 will need to arrive at school between 0820 and 0830 and enter the site via the West gate from Anchor Lane only, and then follow the clearly marked one way system to their Period One classroom, NOT their form room.
- Year 9 will need to arrive at school between 0830 and 0840 and enter the site via the East gate from Heath Lane only, and then follow the clearly marked one way system to their Period One classroom, NOT their form room.
- Year 10 will need to arrive at school between 0830 and 0840 and enter the site via the West gate from Anchor Lane only, and then follow the clearly marked one way system to their Period One classroom, NOT their form room.
- Year 11 will need to arrive at school between 0840 and 0850 and enter site via the East gate from Heath Lane only, and then follow the clearly marked one way system to their Period One classroom, NOT their form room.
- Year 12 will need to arrive at school between 0840 and 0850 and enter the site via the West gate from Anchor Lane only.
 - On their first day they will be met and collected and their induction day will teach them everything they need to know for subsequent days.
- Year 13 will need to arrive at school between 0840 and 0850 and enter site via the West gate from Anchor Lane only, and then follow the clearly marked one way system to their Period One classroom, NOT their form room.
- We appreciate that these new start times may be inconvenient for parents and carers, especially those who have children in more than one year group and we thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation. If multiple children are being dropped at the same time then they must adhere to strict social distancing and keep away from other years groups. We are looking into a shelter that we can provide in case of inclement weather.
- Please do not drop-off children outside the school gates or try to enter the car parks - this remains as dangerous to everyone as it was before March 2020 - and the roads are marked with zig zags and double yellow lines to protect everyone.
- At the end of the school day:
 - Years 7 and 8 will finish at 1530 and leave by the same gate from which they entered.
 - Year 9 and 10 will finish at 1540 and leave by the same gate from which they entered.
 - Years 11, 12 and 13 will finish at 1550, or may be invited to stay for an extra session after school until 1700. Information about these sessions will follow in September. They will leave by the same gate from which they entered.
 - We have tried to liaise with local bus companies, but this has not been possible in all cases. It may be that your child needs to leave early or arrive late in order to catch a specific service. Please email absence@hemelschool.com to explain the details for your children.

- A hot meal will be available every day at lunch time, but with a much reduced menu. We will be running two separate canteen services for separate year groups. We are asking everyone to bring packed lunches if they can. Lunches will continue to be provided for those entitled to Free School Meals.
- All students must have their own water bottles.
- All students should have the normal equipment, but additionally:
 - A pencil sharpener that catches the peelings to prevent trips to the bin.
 - Their own coloured pencils and glue sticks to prevent having to use shared class sets.
 - Packeted tissues and wipes/alcohol gels so they can take **Responsibility** for their own hygiene whenever they feel they need to.
- Lessons will run as normally as possible but the government guidance asks us to do a number of additional things, which will include:
 - Classrooms will be rearranged so everyone is facing forwards.
 - Students will be taught to and then expected to disinfect, using materials provided by us, items that they use or share in the classroom or specialist teaching areas.
 - Some activities will not be able to be done, or may be done in demonstration only, or may be delayed until later in the year.
 - Teachers will clean and disinfect classrooms between each class.
 - There will be other additional cleaning and disinfection throughout the school.
- There will be a strict one way system, which will mean longer journeys between classes, often not taking the most direct route. There will be lots of signs and students will be taught the route on their first day.
- When moving around school students must move calmly, unrushed and sensibly, and keep at least 1m+ away from anyone else. To make this possible there will be a longer movement time, of ten minutes, between each lesson.
- There will be additional hand washing facilities all around site and those normally found in the toilets. Students can use these at break, lunch, as they enter and exit site and during these longer movement times. Students will not be able to use toilets during lessons.
- At break and lunch time, different year groups will be given different areas in which to socialise in both dry and wet weather.
- Children must Respect social distancing and:
 - Keep 1m+ away from teachers, support staff and other adults.
 - Keep 1m+ away from children in other year groups, and stay to their year group areas.
 - Respect the personal space of those in their year group.
 - Not touch each other - for example no hugging or shaking hands.
 - Demonstrate our values at all times: **Respect, Relationships, Responsibility, Reflection and Resilience**.

- We will wear full, smart school uniforms or school PE kits (only if they have a PE lesson that day) every day.
- Every student must bring a reading book every day. There will be Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) sessions each day. This can be a story book, a factual book, a newspaper, or a magazine.
- Students and teachers will need to wear face coverings on public transport if they come to school that way and then:
 - If these are disposable we will provide facilities at both gates to do so. Disposable face coverings are not recommended as they deplete the stock available to the NHS and represent a significant environmental impact.
 - If they are fabric, reusable face coverings then students should have a suitable bag, like a ziplock sandwich bag, in which to put them.
 - Information on [how to make a cloth face covering](#) is here. Students ideally need two or three so they can be washed each day.
- For at least the autumn term, there will be no big events, like parents evening or concerts and we will find different ways of doing these, and we will write to you in due course.
- We will put in place additional pastoral and academic support for all year groups to close any gaps in learning and support student transition back to school and much of this has already started using a variety of methods.
- We have created three new staff posts, specifically to support children who need additional one-to-one and small group work.
- Meetings with parents, carers and other visitors will be online whenever possible. Where visitors are needing to come onto site they will be met and escorted. We will be introducing new security gates shortly after reopening.
- If you believe that your child cannot return to school because they are medically vulnerable please take advice from your GP/consultant and then contact t.jordan@hemelschool.com before the 4th September.
- There is one area in which there does seem to be a little confusion, a lot of contradiction and ongoing debate. This is around the wearing of face coverings in school by students, and face coverings and/or visors by staff. We do not feel that there has been any update from the government on this over the summer. The government's official guidance to schools and to you is that face coverings are not necessary in school and may interfere with learning. We will not object to parents or carers making their own judgements for their children that are different to this official guidance, provided it is a proper face covering, and not a balaclava, hoodie, scarf, bandana or any other item being worn for fashion. We are applying the same to our staff.

[The government has produced this guide for parents and carers on their vision for schools from September.](#)

CORONAVIRUS STAY ALERT TO STAY SAFE

- ✔ Keep a safe distance from others
- ✔ Stay home as much as possible
- ✔ Keep washing your hands regularly

STAY ALERT
CONTROL
THE VIRUS
SAVE LIVES

Coronavirus

Wash your hands
with soap and water
more often
for 20 seconds

Use a tissue to turn off the tap.
Dry hands thoroughly.



CORONAVIRUS
PROTECT
YOURSELF
& OTHERS



CATCH IT.



BIN IT.



KILL IT.