



4th March 2021

Dear Parents,

We are looking forward to seeing the children back on Monday! As stated in my school update last Friday, our plan for the return is similar to the one that we had planned in January. This is a cautious plan which will take us up to Easter, and then we can consider whether we are in a position in terms of infection rates, to make any changes.

Rates do seem to be falling but this could also change again which is why we are exercising caution and why it is also important that we continue to work together to follow the rules set both in the school grounds and also in terms of our behaviour outside of school.

In order to ease congestion we are moving to a staggered beginning and end to the school day. In order for this to work, it is important that we try to stick to these times and move through the school promptly dropping off and picking up with as little congregation as we can. Please move quickly along the pathways too.

Below are the key steps that we need everyone to follow to help support us in our bid to be as 'Covid aware' as we can be:

1) Drop off and Pick up times

There will be **staggered drop off and pick up times** and we have decided to do this by house group so that siblings can be dropped off and picked up together more easily.

These times will be as follows:

For drop off	For collection
8.40 a.m. Batchwood	3.00 p.m. Batchwood
8.45 a.m. Harpenden	3.05 p.m. Harpenden
8.50 a.m. Townsend	3.10 p.m. Townsend
8.55 a.m. Waverley	3.15 p.m. Waverley

2) Return to packed lunches

The school kitchen will be open and be offering a daily packed lunch choice of ham, cheese or tuna roll. Please make sure that your child understands that they should be ordering a school packed lunch if they are not bringing one from home.

Children in KS2 only may wish to bring in a small snack for morning break. Whilst our preference, snacks do not need to be fruit/vegetables but please no items which contain nuts, chocolate or sweets.

3) PE Kits / Warm clothing / Equipment

We are eliminating locker usage because it causes our children to cross over a lot in corridors – potentially with other bubbles. **We are therefore requesting that children come in PE kit on their PE days.** This does mean long jogging bottoms/warm fleeces for this term and also of course a warm coat. We are opening lots of windows and doors to allow for ventilation as well, so as with before Christmas, we recommend that children have warm fleeces to wear over their school uniform on non-PE days—preferably in blue, black or grey if you have them, but there is no need to make a special purchase. For younger children you may want to supply extra clothes in case of ‘accidents’!

PE DAYS	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
EYFS	PE - ALL				
Year 1				PE – ALL	
Year 2		Pine only		PE – ALL	Larch & Cedar only
Year 3			PE – ALL		PE – ALL
Year 4	PE - ALL		PE - ALL		
Year 5	Swallow & Moorhen only	PE – ALL			Kestrel only
Year 6		PE – ALL			PE – ALL

Please do not send in toys/cards/comforters with your children as these can also be a source of infection – children from Year 2 up will need their pencil cases (to then be kept in school) but there should be little else coming in other than packed lunches, water bottles and anything requested by the class teacher such as homework diaries.

4) Temperature Tests

We have ordered extra thermometers and once children have arrived in class we will be measuring their temperature. Please err on the side of caution and keep children off who are ill during this pandemic. Remember that if children have any Covid symptoms – a high temperature, a new continuous cough or a loss/change in sense of taste/smell, then they should not be in school and you must follow the latest government guidance.

5) One way system / Cars

I have been happy to allow parents, who have parked in the drop off zone in the mornings to leave via the driveway and down the steps back to the drop off zone. I am happy with the way that this is working in the morning only please.

However, after school there are issues with lots of parents and children negotiating the traffic in the drop-off zone when they have not parked there. I know that it is an inconvenience but using the field and walking round if you live/have a car on Townsend Drive is far safer and I would request that you do this - it allows parents to distance more easily and stops the danger to children of crossing traffic.

This relies on common sense – we do not have the staff/time to police every person using the drop off car park area!

All staff/authorised cars must be on site by **8.30 a.m.** in the morning and leave from **3.30 pm** in the afternoon (it was 3.25 p.m. before Christmas but I found that there was still a number of parents and children leaving at that time.)

9) Communications with teachers

These will need to be made via our school admin email address – admin@gardenfields.herts.sch.uk

The year group emails will be switched off.

This is to ensure that key messages such as about pick-ups, illness etc. are dealt with – because now teaching staff are back in the classroom they cannot be overseeing emails.

Please remember not to come up to the classrooms to talk to staff at this time. It is not ideal and we don't like to have to distance from you but this is for everybody's safety!

10) After School Clubs

We are returning to hosting our football and netball clubs - but just not in the first week back! These will resume in the last two weeks of term for older juniors. However, we are looking at the possibility of broadening this in the summer term – should infection rates continue to fall.

Please also note that our staff team are now taking regular **Lateral Flow Covid** tests twice weekly. You can now obtain these for your children and family too! These are not run via the school but something that you can do at home.

If you take them on a Wednesday and Sunday evening then they will also be in synch with our school testing.

This is a great way in which you can help us to try and keep our school and families virus free!

For further information go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rapid-lateral-flow-testing-for-households-and-bubbles-of-school-pupils-and-staff>

We look forward to having everybody back next week!

With kind regards,

Mr Farrugia