

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
Education Department

Highworth Combined School & Nursery

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Newsletter: 28th January 2022 Issue: 18

Letters sent home & e-School messages this week: Nursery Closed (Mon 24th Jan), Postponed Trip – New Date (Y3), Swimming Lessons Update (4S), No Morning School Crossing Patroller

Dear all

As I write this, the sun is shining and it is a lot warmer than of late. What's more, staff are busy putting up our latest displays of work. I know it's a little way off yet, but I can't help but have happy thoughts of spring. Once the displays are complete, we will take photographs and share them on the website.

It has been a challenging week. So far this term there have been 81 cases of COVID-19 amongst the children and staff of our school, with this week seeing an average of 50 pupils and 10 staff members absent each day. I note that the BBC news website is reporting a similar rate of absence across the country so we are not alone. The situation creates difficulties for us all: parents having to remain at home to look after children; children in school working with unfamiliar teachers; staff covering a number of different roles in addition to their normal one and a great deal of uncertainty for all about what each day may bring! I know that we all just want this pandemic to be over, but sadly for primary schools and all those connected with them, the situation is as difficult as it's ever been during this dreadful 2 years.

As a consequence of the pressure caused by staff absence, we need to make a small change to the arrangements for remote learning. We will continue to send links to Oak National Academy lessons, via eSchools, to the families of children who are absent with COVID-19 infections (and who are well enough to complete remote learning). However, verbal feedback on work completed (and green cards for effort) will now be given to children by their class teacher upon their return to school. We provided exercise books at the end of last term so the best thing to do is to ask children to complete work in these books and then send them into school with your child on their first day back. This change will come into effect from Monday 31st January.

Let's hope there is better news for us all at the end of next week.

Best wishes. Clare Pankhania

ATTENDANCE

The display board at the front of the school shows each year group's weekly attendance.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE TARGET IS 96%

BEST ATTENDANCE: 93% (CLASS 4M)

WELL DONE

OUR WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

IS WELL BELOW TARGET AT 83.3%

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES THIS WEEK:

Friday 4th February – pm

Y5 Handball Sports Hub Event



Buckinghamshire Family Learning

Learn, simple first aid for
the family including basic
CPR.

Discover hints and
tips using everyday
items from home.

Everyday First Aid

Join our **free**, 2.5 hour workshop with a medical professional
who works for the ambulance service

For parents and carers of children at Primary school in
Buckinghamshire

Thursday 17th February 9.30am – 12.30pm

Highcrest Adult Learning Centre, High Wycombe

To book your place, please click on: [Everyday First Aid - Highcrest ALC, High Wycombe \(adultlearningbc.ac.uk\)](https://adultlearningbc.ac.uk) or call the enrolment team on 01296 383582

For more information text or call Mandy on 07825 86202



First Aid



buckinghamshireadultlearning



BucksAdLearning



adultlearningbc.ac.uk

As at all other times during the pandemic when considering how to manage these implications, we have 2 overriding objectives: to limit the disruption to learning for pupils; keep pupils, families and staff as safe as possible. After discussions with senior leaders, head teacher colleagues, the Co-Chairs of Governors and staff I have decided that these 2 objectives can best be achieved by maintaining a 10-day self-isolation period for staff and pupils (not the 7-day period suggested in some circumstances). This is necessary for the following reasons:

- Classrooms are crowded and social distancing is not possible
- Primary school age children are not required to wear masks
- At Highworth there are a number of children and adults who are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19

Remote learning can be provided for children who are isolating, but well enough to complete it.

In addition, please consider completing regular LFD tests (twice weekly) for you and your children

It is also important that you support us with all of the other ways of minimising the spread of COVID-19 as shown on the Parental Agreement below:

Parental agreement for safe return to school of all pupils on 5th January 2022

You must read, understand and agree every point before sending your child to school

The safe opening of school is dependent upon avoiding all contact with anyone who is, or could be, infected with coronavirus. The safety of our whole community is dependent on all of us following these rules. They must be followed:

- **I will never enter any part of the school site if me or my child has any of the symptoms of Covid 19**

Symptoms of Coronavirus

- **high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)**
- **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)**
- **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**

Please note that the symptoms of the Omicron variant are often likened to those of a cold. If your child has a cold, there is a more than 50% chance that they actually have COVID-19

- **If my child has any of these symptoms, regardless of what I think may have caused them, I will ensure that they take a PCR test. I know that my child will be allowed to return to school once they have received a negative result or, if the test is positive, that they have self-isolated for 10 days**
- **If my child receives a positive PCR test, I will let the school know and ensure that they self-isolate for 10 days from the start of symptoms (or test date if no symptoms)**
- **If my child is a contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID 19, I know that government guidance is that they should take a LFD test every day for 7 days, seeking a PCR test if they have a positive result during the 7 days**
- **I know that if my child develops symptoms of Covid 19 (see above) at school, I will be contacted and asked to collect them immediately. I will take them for a PCR test as soon as possible. I know that my child will be allowed to return to school once they have received a negative result or, if the test is positive, that they have self-isolated for 10 days**

In addition, I know that in sending my child to school I am agreeing that everyone in my household will follow every one of these steps. I know that this is essential to ensure the safety of my child, Highworth staff and our community.

- I know that if my child is unable to attend school, I need to email reception@highworthcombined.co.uk, giving the following information: child's name and class; likely length of absence; Reason for absence. Please specify whether this is due to:
 - Illness and that this is unrelated to Covid 19
 - Self-isolation due to symptoms of Covid 19, or contact with a positive case
- I will send my child to school every day with a bottle of water with their name written clearly on it as I know that the school drinking fountains will not be available
- I will send my child to school with their lunchbox if needed
- If my child is in Nursery, I will send them to school with a change of clothes in a named bag
- I will ensure that my child is ready to start lessons by arriving between 8.45am and 8.55am. If my child is late, I know that I will need to take them to the main office entrance to the school and that they will be recorded as having arrived late
- If my child is in Nursery, I know that I should take them into the cloakroom, help them hang up their coat etc. and then accompany them into the classroom
- If my child is in Reception, I will wait with them behind the gate to the playground until it opens at 8.40am, when I will walk with them to the classroom door
- If my child is in Years 1 to 4, I will ensure that they are supervised until the gates to the quadrangle open, when I will say goodbye and allow them to walk independently to their classroom
- If my child is in Year 5 or 6, I know that they will be able to walk to the door to their classroom at 8.40am when the gate to the playground opens
- I will collect my child promptly at 3.20pm from the door to the classroom. If I wish my child (years 4 to 6 only) to walk home independently, I will send a letter saying so to their class teacher
- I will send my child to school in their school uniform, except when they have a PE lesson (please see new Uniform guide)
- I will send my child to school in their PE kit one day a week, when their class has a PE lesson:
 - Monday: Year 4 and Year 6; Tuesday: Year 3; Wednesday: Year R and Year 1; Thursday: Year 5; Friday: Year 2

- If my child is having a school packed lunch, I will order it on line before Thursday each week for the following week (for all year groups including Nursery and Reception). I will do this even if my child qualifies for a free school meal.
- I will not send hand sanitiser to school with my child as I know that they will wash their hands several times during the day
- I will ensure that I have given my child any required medication and applied sun protection or lotions before they come to school
- I will not send my child to school with a pencil case as I know that one will be provided by school

C. Pankhania

Mrs C. Pankhania
Head Teacher

Information for Parents

COVID-19 Testing

Twice weekly testing using Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs) remains recommended for the families of school-aged children. These are available for free, see this link to order: [Order coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests)

This helps to identify if you or your child is infected so that others in the school and wider community can be protected. Please note that this type of testing is only for people without symptoms of COVID-19 and if you test positive, you need to self-isolate and arrange for a free confirmatory PCR test via this link:

[Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/get-free-pcr-test)

COVID-19 Vaccination

People aged 16 and over, including adults, can book a vaccination appointment through the National Booking System or attend a walk-in clinic:

- [Book or manage a 1st or 2nd dose of the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
- [Find a walk-in coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination site - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Severe illness and death from COVID-19 infection are more likely with increasing age. Therefore, adults are more vulnerable than children and it is important that you are vaccinated as well as any of your eligible children to protect your and your family's health.

If you are eligible for a COVID-19 booster vaccination (people aged 50 and over, or anyone aged 16 and over with a high-risk health condition) then you can book an appointment to have it [here](#), although please note that it must be at least 6 months since your second dose of the vaccine. This will help to top-up your protection against COVID during the Winter months.

Flu and other winter viruses

As we move into winter, other viruses may start to spread, causing flu and colds. The symptoms from these infections can be similar to those of COVID-19.

It is important to get a free PCR test for COVID-19 first if you or your child develops any of the following: a new continuous cough; a raised temperature; a change in taste or smell. If this test is negative, it is still important to continue testing twice-weekly using LFDs as you or your child might go on to become infected with COVID-19 later.

People who are eligible, including children aged 2-15 years old and anyone between the ages of 6 months and 50 years old who is clinically vulnerable can have a free NHS flu vaccine this year, which is the best way of protecting ourselves and those around.