

BACK TO SCHOOL

A guide to a smooth and safe transition





MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD

Dear Parents

Thank you for your support since our return from the Easter break during which time we have transitioned fully to online teaching and learning. I am very proud of the way our staff have risen to the challenge and for their commitment and creativity in delivering such excellent provision at such short notice. I am also very proud of our children and how well they have adapted so quickly to this unfamiliar approach to learning.

As you will know, the government has requested that we reopen our school and classrooms to Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from the 1st June. We are very pleased to reopen for these classes as we believe that children need their friends and the social interaction of the school environment. We have given consideration to opening other classes in addition to these but unfortunately, we are not permitted to deviate from the government's directive. We are following the Department for Education's guidance closely as we prepare for reopening. These measures include teaching small classes or clusters of pupils, social distancing in the school buildings as much as possible and an enhanced cleaning regime both at the end of the day and during the day – as well as regular and careful handwashing. We are making preparations now to make sure all this is in place and I would like to assure you that we shall only reopen after completing a thorough risk assessment.

At this point in time, due to the volume of staff shielding and/or number of children in school, our well-received Online Learning Programme will continue in the form that is has been for the first half of the Summer Term.

This set-up may need to be reviewed should the government decide to expand the year groups or change their stance on shielding measures. Children who do come in will be supervised by a member of staff and supported to access the VLE and Teams via the main screen in the classroom.

Some of our sister schools in Switzerland and Vietnam have reopened recently. They report the joyful return of their young charges and we anticipate celebrating at the front gate when some of our own pupils return. We look forward to a time when all our children can come back to school.

Finally, I would like to clarify the school's position on fees for the rest of the Summer Term for those who are returning to school. Although we did communicate previously that once schools reopen, we would revert to normal fees, we have decided to waive this for the remainder of the summer term. The exceptional circumstances, the economic situation, and the value we place on our relationship with you – our parent community – means we have decided the existing discount will continue for this academic year. We hope that this, combined with the freezing of tuition fees for next year, will go some way to assisting you.

Thank you once again for your support of the school this Summer Term, and for your encouragement and feedback. As ever, please let me know if you have any questions.

Kind regards

Mrs Friel
Head

RE-OPENING APPROACH & TIMELINE

In developing the plan for our return to school we have followed government guidelines, listened to your views through our Parent Survey and built on learnings from other Cognita schools across the world.

The staggered return by year groups helps us to welcome the school community back through our doors in a safe, orderly and effective manner.

The schedule for return is set out clearly below, together with new timings for the school day.

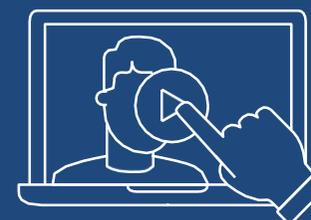
Years	Date of return	School day	Drop off	Pick up
Nursery	Wednesday 3 rd June	08:20-14:15	08:20	14:15
Reception	Wednesday 3 rd June	08:20-14:15	08:20	14:15
Year 1	Tuesday 2 nd June	08:35-14:30	08:35	14:30
Year 6	Monday 1 st June	08:45-15:30	08:45	15:30
Years 2-5	TBC	TBC		
Year 8	TBC	TBC		

A COMBINED TRANSITION TO TEACHING & LEARNING

As a school we are committed to balancing the needs of both the students in our physical classrooms and also those who remain in our virtual classrooms.

To do this we will:

- Continue the online educational provision for students who are not yet in the 'returning' year groups.
- Provide online learning for those students whose parents have actively decided not to send their child to school for the time being despite being in the 'returning' year groups.
- Provide supervision of the continued online learning of those children who do return.
- Please note this will be on a 'best endeavours' basis.
- We will review this approach should government guidance change regarding year groups and shielding.



NEW GUIDANCE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

We will all have to adapt our behaviour during the school day to ensure everyone's safety.

SOCIAL DISTANCING IN THE CLASSROOM

We are following the government advice: *...early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff.*

We know young children will not stay apart whilst playing, especially after not seeing each other for such a long time. To mitigate the risk we are following the advice that students are split into 'micro-classes'.

Government guidance stipulates a maximum size of 15 per class. Our maximum sizes vary dependent on the classrooms. This means that students will be assigned a class and will stay within it for the whole day, including eating lunch and the morning snack. The teacher/adult will also stay with them.

We are using all the available space and staff we have to achieve this government stipulation so your child may unfortunately not be in their usual classroom or with their usual teacher.

BREAK TIMES

We will stagger break times to avoid classes mixing. It's not something we do happily as playtime is a key part of learning, but it is a significant risk mitigation.

MOVING AROUND SCHOOL

We will be operating a one-way system to manage the flow of people around the building on the ground floor and toilets area.

We have added signage to help everyone maintain social distancing.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

We will continue to instruct children to regularly wash hands just as we did pre-lockdown. Children will wash their hands as soon as they arrive and before and after all break times.

Extra supplies of soap and paper towels have been purchased.

You can help by reminding your children of the need to regularly wash their hands for 20 seconds by singing happy birthday twice.

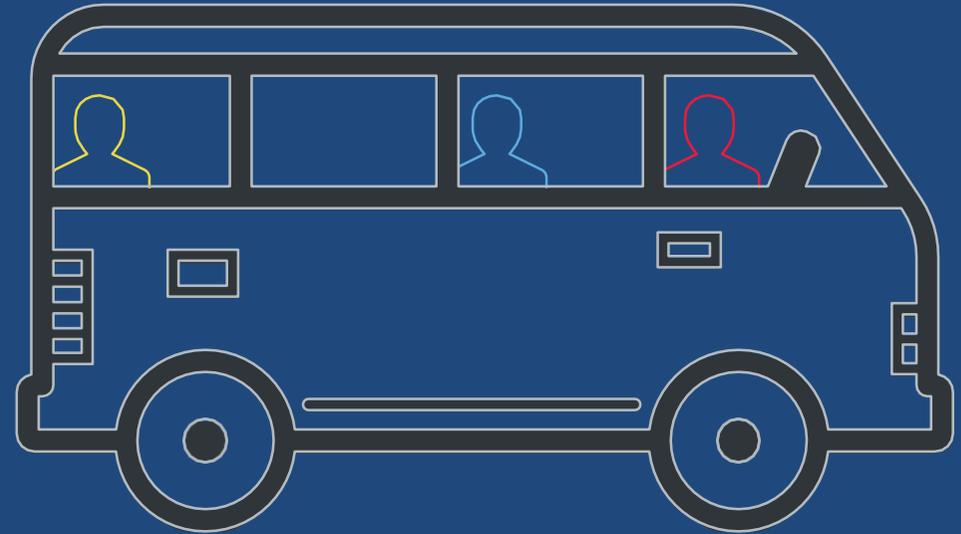
To facilitate regular washing of clothes, children will attend in their own clothes.

OTHER GUIDANCE

Please send your child's books and stationery in on the first day they attend. These will remain in school until the last day of term/they attend.



SCHOOL SERVICES



Transport

- As per government advice we urge you to avoid public transport, if possible. If not possible please follow guidelines around face coverings and carry hand sanitiser with you or wear gloves.
- Please follow drop off and pick up times carefully. They are designed to avoid crowding.
- We have introduced the following system to limit social contact during these times: please keep to the 2m marking in the car park and parents are asked not to enter the school.
- Children will enter and leave via the lower entrance to the school.

Catering:

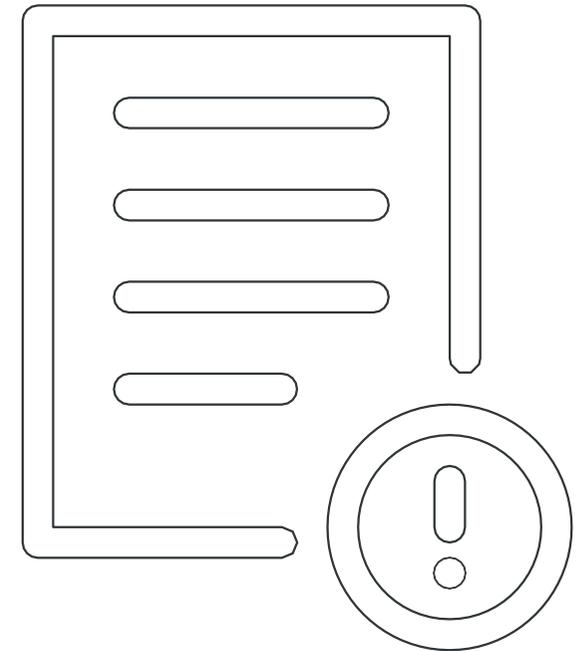
- We request that all children bring in packed lunches, which include a morning snack. Lunch will be consumed in classrooms.
- Please consider the allergies of other children and do not pack nuts into the lunches.

Extra-Curricular:

- We will not be offering before and after school care for the time being, although we are eager to offer this service as soon as this is feasible.
- There will be no extra-curricular clubs or events such as sports fixtures.
- Extra-curricular activity is an important part of the educational experience and we hope to return to a normal schedule as soon as government guidance allows.

PARENT GUIDE AT A GLANCE

1. Talk to your child about the new measures in this guide.
2. Take note of any changes to the timings of the school day for your child.
3. Please provide a packed lunch for your child, adhering to the no-nuts policy.
4. If your child is not returning you should have confirmed this by now. If you subsequently change your mind, please give us 48 hours' notice.



FAQS



WILL THE SCHOOL FEES DISCOUNT BE REMOVED?

No. Although we did communicate previously that once schools re-open, we would revert to normal fees we have decided to waive this for the remainder of the summer term. The exceptional circumstances, the economic situation, and the value we place on our relationship with you – our parent community – means we have decided the existing discount continues for this academic year. The fee freeze for next year remains too.

WHAT'S YOUR POLICY ON VISITORS?

For now, we will not be welcoming external visitors into our school during this period, except in exceptional circumstances for the purposes of maintenance or health & safety.

As parents, you are always welcome to contact us and arrange an online face to face meeting.

WHAT IF I CHOOSE NOT TO SEND MY CHILD BACK TO SCHOOL?

We understand that some parents and students are wary about physically returning to school and we will continue to provide online learning for all our pupils including those remaining at home.

HOW ARE YOU RECORDING ABSENCE OF PUPILS WHEN SCHOOL RE-OPENS?

If you choose not to send your child back to school for the time being, for those in the 'returning' year groups, this will be recorded as an 'Authorised Absence'.

WHAT IS YOUR CLEANING REGIME?

We have a robust cleaning regime throughout the school day with a focus on bathrooms and high-touch areas. At the end of the day we also repeat this and pay particular attention on the common areas of the school, surfaces and equipment. On a Friday evening we will do a weekly enhanced clean.

In the instance of a confirmed COVID-19 case we will close the school and do a deep clean which includes all surface areas and carpets. In all cases we use coronavirus approved disinfectants/aerosols, and our cleaners have ordered sufficient stocks.

WILL CHILDREN AND STAFF BE EXPECTED TO WEAR FACE COVERINGS ON SITE?

No. This is the government advice: *Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended.*

Face coverings are primarily worn to prevent the wearer from spreading the virus rather than catching it. Primary age children are likely to be distracted and discomforted by the wearing of such an item and cannot be expected to do so safely.

If a student or member of staff wishes to wear a face covering they will be allowed to do so. We request they follow guidance on the safe method of using and when removing it should be placed carefully into a sealed plastic bag.

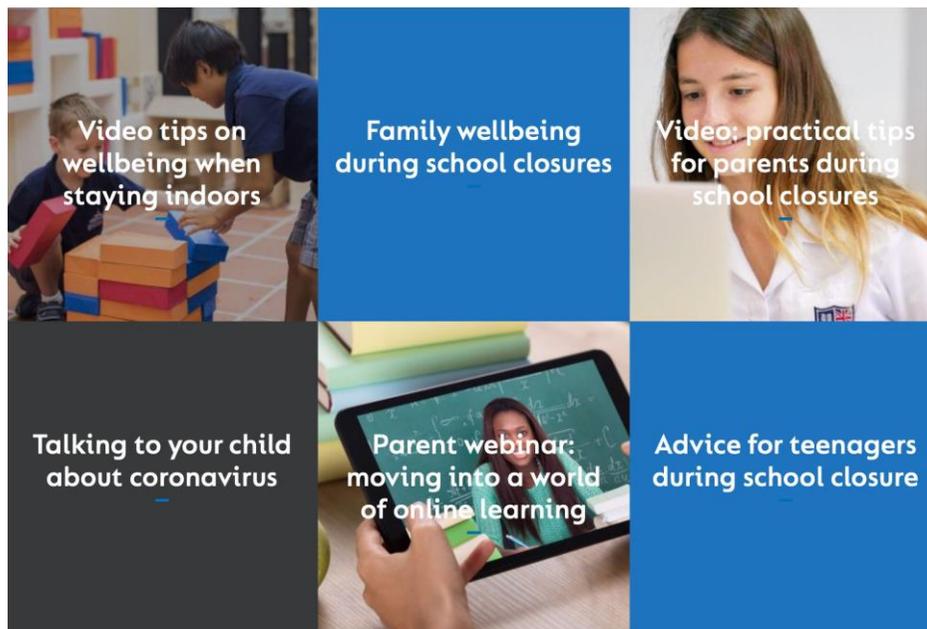
WHAT IF A CHILD IN A GROUP HAS COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

All parents are required to check their child's temperature each morning before bringing them into school. If a child displays any symptoms they must not be brought into school and the school should be informed. If a child is displaying symptoms in school, the child will immediately be isolated, and their parent/guardian will be asked to collect them.

WELLBEING

The transition back to school will still be a challenge for all of us trying to adjust to a new way of 'being', coping with fear of the unknown. The wellbeing of our students, parents and teaching staff is our highest priority and we are lucky to be part of Cognita who have been able to provide lots of resources to support our school communities since the start of the lockdown.

This includes live webinars with our education experts, podcasts, and a series of videos and resources on wellbeing in these strange times for both students and parents. Members of our parent community have even shared how they have coped with lockdown. This evolving set of content can all be found at www.cognita.com



POSITIVE FEEDBACK

It was great to hear some of your feedback about how the school responded during lockdown. **Here are a few of the comments that make us feel proud.**

"Firstly, I would like to say a big Thank You !!! to all the teachers . . . for the effort you all are putting in to ensure the online learning schedule helps and engages every child."

"Virtual learning has been absolutely wonderful for us . . . It has made such a big difference."

"I would like to thank you for the amazing work put together for Home-schooling . . . Your level of energy, listening and patience is impressive."

"The online teaching is excellent and very well structured. A huge thank you for all the support the Clifton Lodge team is providing during this crisis .We really appreciate all your help."

"The teachers have been simply amazing; they are patient and helpful with the children and ensure that they engage with each child whilst respecting the pace at which they learn."

"The kids manage to follow the school programme and they learn to adapt and to be more autonomous... You empower them well to grow with the process and human support provided."