



Nursery School

**Address:** Wright Street, Chorley, PR6 0SL **Tel:** 01257 262556 **Fax:** 01257 262441  
**Email:** admin@highfield-nur.lancs.sch.uk

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope that you are in good spirits and good health. I would like to say a BIG thank you on behalf of myself, and all Duke Street and Highfield staff, for your support over the Spring and Summer terms and for your kind words and support through the pandemic. We feel privileged to be part of your lives and your child's early education and care and we cannot wait to be back together. We are really looking forward to seeing you all in September.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all my staff at both schools for their constant hard work and commitment throughout the pandemic and during the summer period. Teaching staff have been extra busy getting the environments ready for an exciting and safe start to the year. There will be a few small changes as we have removed some resources and soft furnishings, but generally our environments continue to be inspiring, motivating and nurturing places as they were prior to Covid-19!

We are looking forward to welcoming **our new** children to our Highfield family. In following government guidance we have had to make a few changes to their induction.

- We were unable to have a New Parents Meeting in July, so we have sent all relevant information out via emails. Please ring the office and ask to speak to myself or the assistant head teacher if you have any questions or require more information about your child starting.
- Instead of a home- visit, all new children have been invited into nursery for a "meet and greet" appointment with their key person and a senior member of staff. During this short session we will get to know your child, and hopefully answer any of your questions / concerns regarding your child starting nursery. We ask for only one adult and no siblings to attend if possible. You should have received your child's 'meet and greet' date in an email prior to the summer holidays.
- All children have been allocated staggered start dates this will give teachers / keyworkers time to get to know your child, giving them lots of dedicated time to settle them into the nursery and their group.
- Government guidance states all parents should be encouraged not to come into the school premises, this is to reduce the risk of transmission. However we are aware starting nursery can be a daunting experience for the child and their parent and we are sensitive to this. If your child is confident and raring to go, we encourage you to hand your child over at the door to their teacher / keyworker. However, if they are nervous and unsure there may be an opportunity for you to settle your child in an outdoor area and / or entrance area with their keyperson. If this is not available we will agree to allow some parents into the environment to settle their child. **We ask you to follow all COVID-19 procedures including sanitising hands and keeping a 2 metre distance from other children and adults.** We will be unable to allow parents to stay for the full session, however we will work with you to find the best solution for your child. Please bear with us and understand we have had to put these temporary changes into the nursery to keep everyone safe.



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- Your child will attend for 1.5 hours on their first day. At the end of your child's first session, a senior member of staff or your child's teacher will discuss a personalised plan for the following days. **So please be aware it may take your child a few days to settle and stay for their full session.**

### **Returning children**

We recognise the majority of children who are on roll in September are either new to us, or are changing teacher and area. Some have had an extended period of time at home, so transition back into nursery, for some, may be difficult. To top this off we have the challenges around the Covid-19 risk assessment to adhere to. Therefore we have put the following procedures into place:

- Before your child's start date you will receive a video message from their new teacher / keyperson. They will send a short welcome message in and around their new bubble area, please watch it together with your child and talk to them about their new teacher and area.
- If after watching and listening to their messages you would like to speak with your child's new teacher / keyperson you can request they ring you before your child's start date.

We have always been proud of our open door policy for parents to speak to teachers but unfortunately, at the moment, we need to be more aware of adult interactions and so if you would like to speak to a teacher / key person, please contact the office for a mutually agreeable time or to leave a message. Parents are welcome into the nursery entrance (one at a time) anytime, however, we will be restricting the number of adults who are in school when children are in the building except for carefully planned one off events. This is not our usual practice and we hope to resume welcoming parents back into nursery with open arms as soon as it is safely possible.

The Government have provided a wealth of resources for preparing your child for their return to nursery should you feel your child needs any additional support and reassurance. If you need anything in addition to this, please let me know and we'll be happy to help. Find the latest information to support parents here: [gov.uk/backtoschool](http://gov.uk/backtoschool)

We have worked hard using government guidance to implement new and safe procedures for our return to nursery. We will continue to review day-to day practice, if we can change things to support parent's suggestions, at the same time as keeping children and staff safe, we will!

### **Some key points of our return to nursery:**

#### **Bubble groups**

All children have been placed in a small bubble group and bubble area within nursery. Bubble groups range in size between 6 – 30 children. This means they will only play with the children in their bubble and bubble area. Bubbles will have allocated staff, the majority of staff will not mix between bubbles. All areas and resources will be cleaned at the end of the session.



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### Arriving and leaving school

- ✓ All children have been given staggered start and end times, we appreciate this is not ideal for parents, however our priority has to be the safety of children and staff at this time.
- ✓ Key groups and 'bubbles' have been given specific entrance and exit points. If you are unsure where your child's is, please email or ring the nursery office.
- ✓ We ask parents not to congregate within nursery grounds, please respect the 2 metre safe social distancing rule.
- ✓ We would ask for your support by not gathering around the school entrances so all children and parents can be reunited each day.

### Attendance

We hope to see all children from their start date onwards and would ask that you contact the nursery office if your child will not be attending, in particular if your child is in quarantine after a holiday abroad in line with the guidance. In order to keep accurate records, we would ask you ring nursery if your child is ill and won't be attending school for any reason.

### **IMPORTANT – DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO NURSERY IF THEY SEEM UNWELL OR 'NOT THEMSELVES'**

For everyone's safety you must not send your child in if they or any of your household have any of the following symptoms:

- A new continuous dry cough
- Difficulty in breathing
- High temperature
- Loss of smell or taste

The latest government guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

If your child displays symptoms of COVID-19 at school, we will phone you to collect your child, **so please ensure we have up-to-date contact number for you plus an emergency contact number we could use in this instance.** We request that you seek a test for your child when sent home with these symptoms. **If your child tests positive, please let us know as soon as possible as this may impact on other children and staff in the group.**

Please be aware if anyone in your child's 'bubble' group test positive, the whole of the bubble group may all need to self-isolate for 14 days and/ or we may need to close part of nursery for deep cleaning. We will seek Public Health advice if this is the case but by protecting the integrity of our groups, we hope to minimise the impact on others.

If a member of your household has symptoms or COVID-19, the household should follow self-isolating guidance.



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## **Risk Assessment**

I have been awaiting the last flurry of Government guidance before sending this letter, hoping that this will contain the correct details for starting back. We have completed our risk assessment and it is available to view on our website following this link;

<https://highfieldnurseryschoolchorley.co.uk/> the risk assessment can be found on the homepage of the website.

We have tried our best to use the guidance and apply it to our knowledge of our nursery and feel that although we can never be free of risk, we have tried to minimise the possible transmission of the virus through nursery to the best of our ability.

As you are aware, children of nursery age are unable to social distance from each other or from staff, so please be aware when agreeing to send your child back to nursery that there will be no expectation for your child to remain 2 metres distance from other children and staff. We will promote the 1-2 metre distance rule where and when we can, for instance during lunch time and some story times, however we are relying on a range of other measures detailed in the risk assessment to prevent and reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in nursery.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on [head@dukestreet-nur.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:head@dukestreet-nur.lancs.sch.uk).

To summarise,

- Each key-group will be within an allocated indoor and outdoor area within nursery;
- Each key-group will be within a 'bubble' and we will endeavour to reduce contact outside their bubble;
- Nursery environments will be well ventilated;
- Staff will minimise their close contact with each other;
- Each bubble area has its own stock of cleaning materials, hand sanitiser and soap and it will be cleaned regularly.
- Children and staff will be encouraged to wash and sanitise their hands frequently throughout the session and before and after any transitions.

Our focus is to make the transition into nursery as smooth and calm as possible given the circumstances. Staff will continue to provide a nurturing environment to welcome your child back. We will help children connect with environments, staff and each other. Their wellbeing, as always, is a priority, and we want their return to be a happy experience.

We are confident that our September start will be successful for all, but we are prepared to support children and families who may be experiencing any difficulties. Children will have had differing experiences during lockdown and we are ready to build learning on from wherever each child is. Staff are skilled in personalising learning and we will work hard to meet the needs of all child.



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**Don't forget we have our amazing Family Support Worker Claire Denby, who will work closely with families who may require a little support during this transition back to nursery and school.**

I'm certain that we will see many changes as we proceed through the term from both the Government, Lancashire Authority in the event of any local concerns and as a school as we refine our practices, so I would like to thank you for your support in advance of these. Nevertheless, we will start the term with a positive approach and get our children back to learning together. We are looking forward to seeing you all soon.

With kindest regards,

Sue Conron

**Head teacher**