



HIGHFIELD LITTLEPORT ACADEMY

An Active Learning Trust School

Executive Headteacher: Simon Bainbridge
Head of School: Yvonne Skillern

Thursday 31st December 2020

Dear Parent or Carer,

Following the announcement from the Government yesterday, we wanted to update you on our position at Highfield Academies in returning to school in January. Due to the need to deliver additional staff training and to review our risk management, as well as to provide an opportunity for staff to be tested prior to reopening, we will need two additional training days. As you will be aware, mainstream schools will have the full week and part of the next to get this up and running.

Together with the new testing arrangements, including testing our staff weekly, we will be introducing new safety measures in both schools which we will let you know about once we have worked these through with staff.

The latest guidance from the DfE states that the opening of special schools is *encouraged* from the 4th January and then *expected* from the 11th January. But that, "*Special schools and colleges have some flexibility on face-to-face attendance of pupils and students in the first week of term to enable them to appropriately mobilise the testing programme.*"

Therefore, our opening plan is as follows:

- Monday 4th January – **School will be closed to all pupils.** Training day for school staff as previously planned.
- Tuesday 5th **and** Wednesday 6th January - **School will be closed to pupils.** These are additional school staff training days suggested by DfE for Covid-19 training, testing staff and introducing additional risk management measures in both our schools.
- Thursday 7th January – We expect all pupils (secondary and primary) to attend school.

Other Cambs special schools are planning a similar return to the spring term as we are. We hope that you understand that this is so we can ensure that our practice and systems allow a safe and secure environment for your son or daughter.

If you do not send your son or daughter to school you will need to inform us of your reasons, so that we can accurately record this. Please contact us at school in the normal way.



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We appreciate that the news reports in the last few days have been concerning, but we want to reassure you that the stringent measures we have put in place to keep our children and staff as safe as possible last term will continue.

The health and safety of our children and staff is of utmost importance. If we have a number of staff who are having to self-isolate, we may have to make the difficult decision to close a class or bubble. If this happens, we will communicate this to parents via email and update our website. Please bear with us and make necessary arrangements to have your son or daughter at home at short notice. We do apologise for any disruption caused, and hope you understand that we are having to make difficult decisions on a regular basis.

If you are informed that your child's class or bubble needs to close, please can I ask you to advise school transport of this?

We also want to remind you that if your child or anyone in your household develops symptoms, please do not attend school, and continue to follow the Government's self-isolation guidelines. For more information, please visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

We look forward to seeing you all again next week.

Kind regards

Yvonne Skillern
Head of School

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