



# Parents' newsletter

## Introduction

It's that familiar back to school time again, as the weather turns and we tick uniform and shoes off the list, but we know this year feels very different.

So we've put together this second summer newsletter to give you some more information about the new arrangements in York schools from September, including tips on travelling to and from school.

## How school will seem different

It's been six months since some children were last at school, and for those that have been in, their routine has been very different. From September, all pupils will be going back full time and much of their routine will be very similar to what they remember from March.

However, there will be some important changes around regular hand washing, staying in bubbles (this could be a whole year group or class bubble), and keeping socially distanced in class.

Some lessons, such as PE and music, may have to be taught in a slightly different way. Drop-off and pick-up times may be different to avoid large numbers gathering together, and for the same reason it's essential that you leave the school site as soon as possible after dropping off your child.

Your child's school will be in touch with you to tell you about the particular arrangements for them.

## Attending school

It's important that children and young people get back into school or college both for their education and their wellbeing. So the usual rules on attendance will apply from September with full-time attendance compulsory.

Those children who are shielding can return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding, according to the latest public health guidance.

However, headteachers can authorise absence under certain circumstances and if you have concerns about your child, contact your school as soon as possible and talk about what is worrying you. It is better to do this than keep children off with no explanation.

A few children will be unable to attend because they are self-isolating, or have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves, or because they are a close contact of someone who has Covid-19. In this case the school or college will provide remote education. Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, the absence will not be penalised.

Guidance on shielding: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19)

## Worries and anxiety

All school staff will be concerned with your child's wellbeing and helping them to settle back in. They will be building in extra time to speak to them about new rules and routines and to let them talk about their worries.

If your child is particularly anxious about returning, please contact your child's teacher by email or phone. There will not be the same opportunities to speak to them at the start or end of the day as there may have been before.

Parents can also get support from our expert team of educational psychologists. Their helpline will be available on 01904 553055, between 8am and 11.30am, every Wednesday morning from 2 September to 21 October.

## School nurses go online

School nurses from our Healthy Child Service will be running weekly drop-in sessions for secondary age pupils on Tuesdays from 15th September.

The drop-ins will run between 3.45 and 4.45pm and students will be able to use a link to dial in for a ten minute appointment. They are then placed in a 'virtual waiting room' until a nurse is available to see them.

To contact the Healthy Child Service, phone 01904 555475.

Tuesday drop-in dial-in link: [attenduk.vc/schoolnurse/secondary/dropin](https://attenduk.vc/schoolnurse/secondary/dropin)

## Face coverings

Face coverings are not recommended for primary school children, but are supported for secondary and college students in communal areas.

The latest Government guidance on face coverings states that they should be worn by adults and pupils in secondary schools when moving around the school, in spaces such as corridors and communal areas, but only in towns and cities where there are local lockdown restrictions.

In other areas, such as York, headteachers can decide. Our Public Health and Education teams support the wearing of face coverings in communal areas of secondary schools.

The guidance continues to be that it is not necessary to wear face coverings in the classroom because of other measures to reduce the risk of spread of infection.

## Next steps for school leavers

If your child has just left school or college and is considering their next steps, there is information about apprenticeships and courses available.

Check out our Next steps fact sheet at: [www.york.gov.uk/LBYParentStudentSupport](https://www.york.gov.uk/LBYParentStudentSupport)

## Got symptoms?

Remember, if you or your child has these symptoms, get a test

- High temperature
- New or continuous cough
- Loss of taste or smell

How to get a test: [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)



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## School travel extra

### Travelling to and from school in York

As schools go back in September, travel to and from school in York will be a bit different as the roads will be busy and schools and the council will be following government guidance on how children can get to and from school safely.

Social distancing rules are still in effect, so pupils should walk, cycle or scoot to school if they can. This will reduce the pressure on public transport, which has restricted capacity, and means that the roads will be less busy.

If you do have to use the car, please park a short distance away from the school and walk the last bit to the gates if you can.

Please visit [www.itravelyork.info/homepage/152/cycling-and-walking-to-school](http://www.itravelyork.info/homepage/152/cycling-and-walking-to-school) for further information on getting back to school safely.

Here's how you can help make the journey to school healthy and safe.

### Walking, scooting and cycling to school

If you live near to your school, please walk, scoot or cycle. Travelling in this way will make the greatest difference to improving safety, reducing congestion and pollution, and keeping people fit and healthy.

York has a network of off-road and on-road cycle paths and lanes which the Council will be adding to over the next few months.

Find routes that avoid busy roads and ones that suit your ability level.

Download a cycle route map to plan your active journey here:

[www.itravelyork.info/maps-guides](http://www.itravelyork.info/maps-guides)

### Useful links

#### 11-18 years old?

Apply for a YOzone card to travel for by bus for less:

[www.itravelyork.info/yozone](http://www.itravelyork.info/yozone)

#### Bus timetables

Find bus routes, timetables and a city centre map showing bus stops at:

[www.itravelyork.info/buses/bus-routes-and-journey-times/timetables/](http://www.itravelyork.info/buses/bus-routes-and-journey-times/timetables/)

#### Family cycle training

If your cycling skills are a bit rusty, help is available:

[www.itravelyork.info/urban-cycling-training](http://www.itravelyork.info/urban-cycling-training)

#### Live traffic updates

Follow [@york\\_travel](https://twitter.com/york_travel) on Twitter for up-to-date information on roadworks, delays and closures.



## Using the bus and trains

Buses and trains are now generally operating on the routes and to the same frequencies they operated before lockdown. Although capacity has been approximately halved due to social distancing measures, bus operators are providing additional vehicles on routes past schools at peak times to carry anticipated numbers of pupils

Dedicated home to school bus services are being provided, as they were before lockdown. Additional information will be issued by schools about detailed home to school service arrangements – please check for any changes to routes and times here:

[www.yorkpullmanbus.co.uk/school-services/home-to-school-transport-services](http://www.yorkpullmanbus.co.uk/school-services/home-to-school-transport-services)

If you travel to school on the bus or the train, please follow government guidance and the operators' instructions about social distancing. Students over 11 years old will need to wear face coverings, unless they are exempt from doing so, and some seats will need to be left vacant on the vehicles so that travellers can sit apart from one another.

Links to each operator can be found here:

[www.itravelyork.info/buses/partners-bus-operators/](http://www.itravelyork.info/buses/partners-bus-operators/)

There may be changes to bus services and routes, which should be advised by schools and colleges, but changes will also be posted here:

[www.itravelyork.info/travel2school](http://www.itravelyork.info/travel2school)

## Driving and parking

Please only drive to school if you feel there is no effective alternative. We are expecting increased congestion in York as schools and businesses return in September, and space available to set down and pick up at schools will be limited by social distancing measures, such as one way systems at school gates.

If parents or students are car-sharing with someone outside of their support bubble or family, they should share with the same people each time, open the windows for ventilation and wear a face covering if they are over 11 years old and are not exempt from doing so.

If you do drive, here are some ways you can help keep the areas around schools clear and safe.

- Try to park a few minutes' walk away from the school and walk the rest of the way. Use a nearby car park or your school's park and stride site if it has one.
- Please keep clear of the zig zags and yellow lines near the school
- Park considerately and please don't block pavements, road crossings or peoples' drives.

This video highlights the importance of considerate driving near school and the difference it can make:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=rh-0XI2BPtQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rh-0XI2BPtQ)

**For answers to all your back-to-school questions, visit our website:**

[www.york.gov.uk/LBYParentStudentSupport](http://www.york.gov.uk/LBYParentStudentSupport)