



25 September 2020

Dear Parents

As we come to the end of our third full week back in school, I would like to share an update with you on how the start of term has gone and provide some additional information which I hope will be helpful to you going forward.

We were delighted to welcome students back to school following extensive preparations over the summer and have been so impressed with how everyone has settled back into school quickly and adapted to the new ways of working; our students continue to live out our school values on a daily basis.

Attendance

I would like to thank you for working with us to ensure that your child comes to school every day in accordance with government expectations. I appreciate that you may be cautious should your child be unwell and this is understandable. Just to remind you of the COVID-19 symptoms that you should look out for:

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

Attached to this letter is a really helpful guide from the local authority to explain what you should do if your son/daughter is unwell and develops corona virus symptoms. Should this be the case, your son/daughter should not attend school and should self-isolate for at least 10 days from the first day of symptoms. You should also arrange for a test. All other members of the household should self-isolate for 14 days. Please can I ask you to keep us informed as soon as possible if this is the case.

We have had a number of parents who have misunderstood the guidance, which I know can be quite confusing at times. If you are in any doubt about whether your child should attend school or whether your child may have symptoms, please contact us first to discuss this before sending your child in.

Face coverings

As you are aware, all students, staff and visitors are now required to wear a face covering in communal areas of the school following guidance from Public Health. Most students are managing well with this new routine and I would like to thank you for your support with this. However, we have had to issue a large number of disposable masks over recent days and I would ask for your help in ensuring that your child has their own face covering to bring to school every day.

Cashless catering

As we work hard to ensure the safety of our school community, there will inevitably be changes to how we operate. As a result of this, from Monday 5th October the school will operate a fully “cashless” catering system. Students will no longer be able to put money onto their card at the machines in the canteen.

You should have received an activation letter as a reminder of your Parentpay login details but these can be emailed out on request from Megan Mitchell on mmi@birkenheadparkschool.com. Megan can also help with any general Parentpay enquiries or issues.

For any families without internet access, your child will need to liaise with canteen staff directly. Please contact your child's year leader if this presents any particular issues as we must do all we can to minimise cash payments in school.

Remote learning

During these times we know that some students will have to stay at home to self-isolate or will be absent from school for other reasons. All of the content and resources for your child's lessons this half-term can be found on our school website and I would urge them to access these if they are well enough whilst at home.

We are working hard to develop our remote learning plan and will have a further update for you in a few weeks. In the meantime, please can I encourage you to respond to the "surveymonkey" that came out to you about internet and computer access at home to help us with our plans.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your continued support. These are challenging times for us all and I appreciate your understanding and support as we work with you to do the best we can for your child.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's year leader in the first instance.

I hope that you continue to stay safe and well.

With best wishes



Helen Johnson
Headteacher