



MEONCROSS  
SCHOOL

# BACK TO SCHOOL

A guide to a smooth and safe transition





Whilst we are very excited at the prospect of the phased return of pupils to Meoncross School, I am also mindful of the amazing efforts and dedication displayed by our staff over the past few weeks. The speed and agility with which our teachers have adapted from a physical classroom environment to the provision of high quality online learning and teaching has been nothing short of remarkable; and I am sure you will agree that we owe them all a debt of gratitude for this truly outstanding effort.

Cognita and Meoncross School have consistently followed Government advice during the current crisis and therefore we feel it is important to fully support the official request to reopen our school to Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils from 1 June. The school fully concurs with the Government view that it is safe for a phased return of pupils to school. We also strongly believe that it is not only in the children's best academic interests to return, but that also physical interaction with other children is an essential ingredient of children's individual happiness and wellbeing.

# MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Obviously, the main concern regarding pupils returning to school is the potential health risks. However we are confident that by closely adhering to Government advice and guidelines that we will be able to minimise such risks and keep both pupils and staff as safe as possible. These measures include teaching small classes or clusters of pupils (often referred to as 'bubbles'), social distancing in the school buildings and having an enhanced cleaning regime both at the end of the day and during the day – as well as regular and careful handwashing. We are already making preparations to ensure everything is in place for the children's return and I would like to reassure everyone that we shall only reopen after completing a thorough risk assessment.

Although we understand it is not possible to eliminate all risk, we firmly believe that with the right precautions in place, schools are very low risk environments, in terms of the coronavirus. Furthermore, we are also of the opinion that the current lockdown is detrimental to children's mental health and well-being – a view that is increasingly shared amongst medical experts. Therefore, there are also risks to our children of being isolated at home for prolonged periods without access to their friends and peers.

We have been working hard on our reopening plans and have decided it is prudent to have a staff inset day to walk through the risk assessment and run through a 'dress rehearsal' for welcoming back the pupils. This inset day will be on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June and therefore we will welcome pupils back to school on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June. Part of our risk assessment is to ensure that different year groups arrive at slightly different times to better ensure social distancing and you will find all these timings together with other important information within in this brochure.

I must point out that as our teaching staff return to the classroom fulltime, we will no longer be able to continue to offer the same level of online learning support. However, whilst we strongly encourage all pupils to return to school after the May half term holiday, we also understand that for various reasons, such as shielding or underlying health conditions, some children may not be able to return straight away. In these cases we will revert to the pre-Easter remote learning strategy of uploading work via the VLE. However, we will also ask teachers to continue online wellbeing catch ups and learning check ins with those children who remain at home.

Although the return to normal life may still be some way off, I believe the phased return of pupils to school is a very positive step and hope that we will soon be in a position to accept all of the children back to school.

Warmest regards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Cripps'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Mark Cripps  
Headmaster

## 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. **\*\*Please note the important information below for Key worker Parents\*\***

Monday 1 June will be an **Inset Day** for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 therefore, we will be unable to accept **any** Key worker children in school as staff will be preparing for the return to school the next day

**\*\*please note, there is a slight change to the Keyworker timings to allow for the staggered social distance drop off and collection\*\***

Years	Date of return	School day	Drop off	Pick up
Nursery	Tuesday 2 June	09.15-15.15	9.15am	3.15pm
Reception	Tuesday 2 June	08.45-14.45	8.45am	2.45pm
Year 1	Tuesday 2 June	09.00-15.00	9.00am	3.00pm
Year 6	Tuesday 2 June	08.30-14.30	8.30am	2.30pm
Keyworker Year 2 – Year 5	Tuesday 2 June	08.15-15.30	8.15am	3.30pm

# 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 resources and support for those students who have actively decided not to return to school for the time being despite being in the 'returning' year groups
- Please note this will be on a 'best endeavours' basis. Our teachers are now spread across smaller physical classrooms (micro-classes or bubbles) so their capacity to also provide online teaching for these year groups is limited.



# NEW GUIDANCE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

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

## **BEFORE BRINGING YOUR CHILD INTO SCHOOL**

Ensure a temperature reading has been taken for your child. If they have a raised temperature above 37.5°C or if anyone in the house is displaying any symptoms that could be associated with Covid 19, please keep your child at home and notify us.

## **SOCIAL DISTANCING IN THE CLASSROOM**

We have followed the Government guidance in reference to social distancing in the classroom.

Government guidance stipulates a maximum size of 15 per class to create bubbles. We have set a maximum of 15 per bubble. This means that students will be assigned a class and will stay within it for the whole day, including lunch and breaks. The teacher 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.

## **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. Each bubble of children will have their own allocated play areas.

## **MOVING AROUND SCHOOL**

We will be operating a one way system to manage the flow of people around the building.

We have added signage and floor markings to help everyone maintain social distancing.

## **PERSONAL HYGIENE**

We will continue to urge children to regularly wash hands just as we did pre-lockdown. We have enough bathrooms to support this.

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.

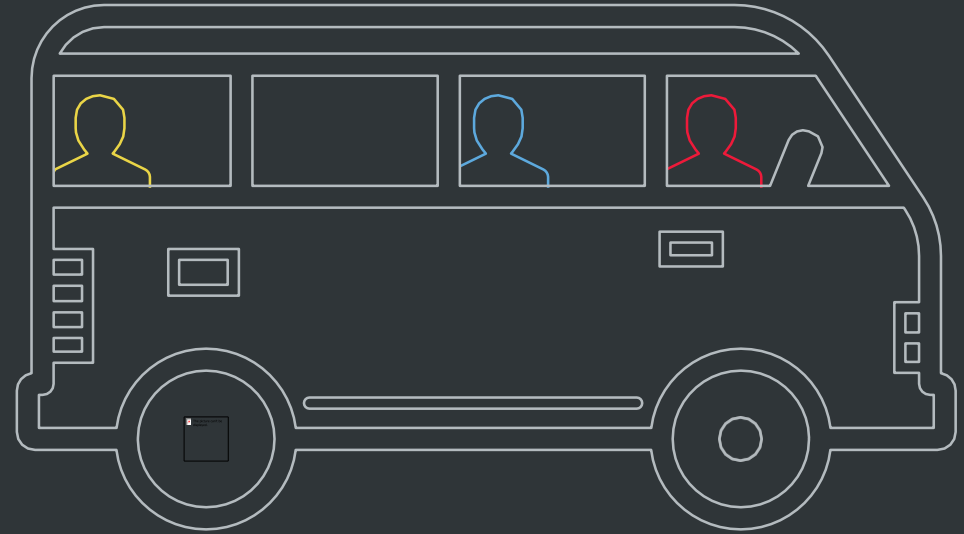
Uniform should be washed daily. With this in mind we are asking pupils to come to school in PE kit.

Pupils are asked not to bring coats ( unless its raining) or any other items into school apart from a named hat if it's sunny. Pupils should come to school wearing sunscreen if it's a sunny day.

The children will be provided with stationery and writing paper in school (individual supplies, not shared) and reading books will not go home.



# 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.
- The normal home to school bus service is suspended during this period due to the very small numbers.

## Catering:

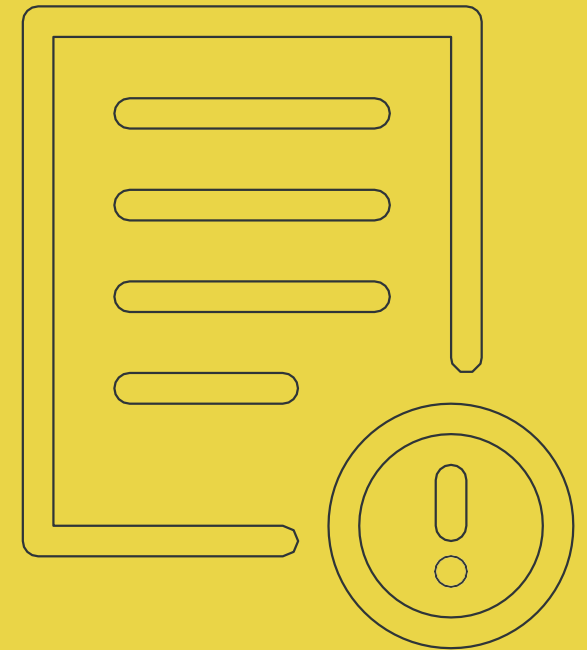
- We will be providing pupils with a hot school meal each day which will be consumed in classrooms to reinforce effective social distancing.
- The costs for lunches will be charged to parents on a pro rata basis
- Please do not send any food in with the children.

## Extra Curricular:

- We will not be offering before and after school care for the remainder of the summer term.
- There will be no extra curricular clubs or events such as sports fixtures
- We are working with Creative Kidz Ltd about the possibility of summer holiday club provision and we will let you know in due course if this is going to be possible

# PARENT GUIDE AT A GLANCE

1. Talk to your child about the new measures in this guide
2. Please note of any changes to the timings of the school day for your child
3. If you have decided not to send your child back to school and you subsequently change your mind please contact the Business Manager Angie Isaac in the first instance.



# FAQS

## **WILL THE SCHOOL FEES DISCOUNT BE REMOVED?**

### **For reception and above:**

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.

### **For nursery:**

Fees for children attending school will return to normal from 2 June.

## **WHAT'S YOUR POLICY ON VISITORS?**

Visitors are welcome to the school but are required to book in advance and we will be following social distancing guidelines.

As parents you are always welcome to contact us and arrange a (socially distanced) face to face meeting.

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

We understand that some parents and students may be wary about physically returning to school and whilst we will not be able to provide the current level of online provision, teachers will do their best to upload work for the children who remain at home and endeavour to continue wellbeing and learning check-ins. This has to be on a 'best endeavours' basis as we look to balance a lower number of staff across an increased number of classes as a result of limiting the number of students in each class.

## **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'. This means that the children will not be penalised if they are unable to attend physical school

## **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 each day we also repeat this and pay particular attention on the common areas of the school. In the instance of a confirmed COVID-19 case we 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.

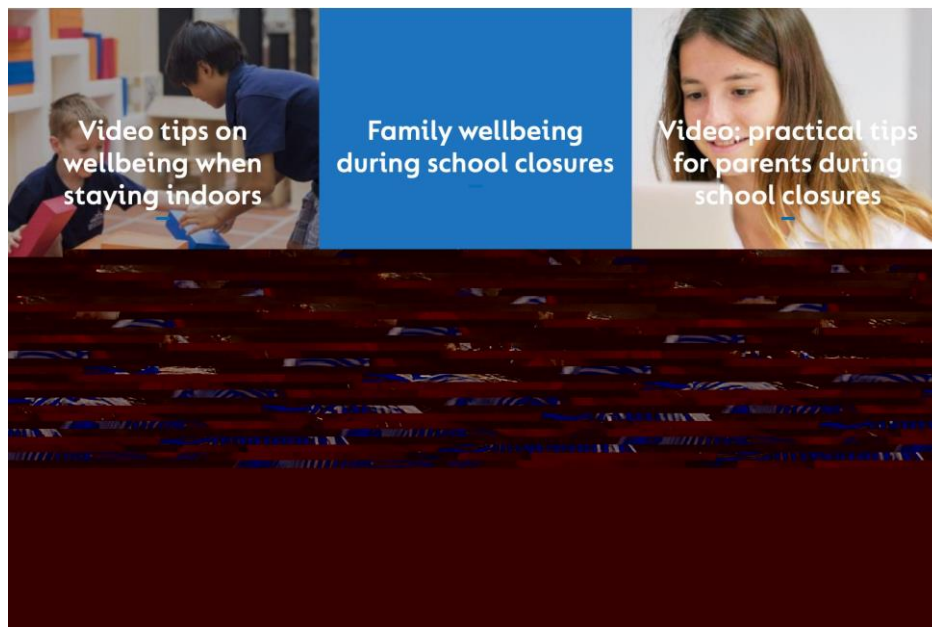
## **WHAT IF I CHANGE MY MIND ABOUT SENDING MY CHILD BACK?**

If you initially told us that your child would not be returning to school and subsequently change your mind, please be aware that we have created bubbles as per the Government guidelines. We have limited capacity to accept more children into these bubbles and therefore, we will operate a first come first served basis until capacity is met. Please contact the school Business Manager in the first instance regarding availability.

# 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 and in some cases balancing a mix of online and face to face learning. 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](http://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.**

“We are mindful of all the hard work every member of Meoncross staff will have put in, and we are extremely appreciative. The inclusion of the wellbeing sessions into the timetable is a very welcome decision and is exactly why we chose Meoncross in the first place - because you care about our children.”

“I wanted to say how impressed we were with the way the Meoncross staff have adapted to this bizarre circumstance we find ourselves in. The online learning has been incredible. Ok, some credit has to go to my daughter for so diligently getting ready for lessons and having far more discipline than I think I could have, but the way you have amended the learning environment has been nothing short of amazing. Thank you for all your continued efforts to support our children.”

“Your teachers are outstanding and are an absolute credit to your school. If they were my employees I would be extremely proud of them.”

“Thank you so much – the school is doing a truly incredible job with the learning provision, and we’ve been blown away with effort and thought that has gone into it all. It is making such a difference.”

“Thanks to all the teachers for working so hard to stay connected with the children.”