



BACK TO SCHOOL



WHAT TO EXPECT : GETTING TO SCHOOL : HELP AND EXTRA SUPPORT

Returning safely for the new term



INTRODUCTION



AS YOUNG people and their families prepare to go back to school, college or nursery we know that many of you may be feeling anxious or have questions about what to expect and how to keep safe.

The past six months have been strange and challenging for all of us, with our routines and normal life abandoned due to the impact

of coronavirus. Many of you haven't been to school since March, and while teachers, families and friends have supported you to learn from home, it's not been the same as being in the classroom with your friends and teachers.

We've been so impressed with the resilience Hackney's young people have shown.

We've heard about your online lessons, the

imaginative ways you've stayed in touch with each other during lockdown and the incredible ways many of you supported others in your community.

You showed the Hackney Spirit we're all so proud of! Now it's time for you to go back to school.

Teachers are looking forward to welcoming you back, and the Council

has been working with them to make sure things are safe and that you feel comfortable and happy being back in the classroom.

Things will be different – for example, some lessons will be taught differently, you might be taught in 'bubbles' and have different break or start and finish times.

This is for your safety, and it will be important that you

listen to the new rules and do what you can to stop the spread of coronavirus too.

We hope this guide will answer some of your questions and reassure you about the steps schools are taking to keep you safe and get your learning back on track.

We hope you enjoy the last couple of weeks of your summer break!

WHAT TO EXPECT



THE Council has been working closely with all of our schools, nurseries and colleges to help them do everything they can to keep pupils, families and staff safe, while making sure you can enjoy your time back at school.

Your safety and well-being are your teachers' top priority.

If you have any concerns, please speak to them – they are there to support you and make sure you feel safe.

Things will be a bit different when you return to school and college for the new academic year.

The steps each school has taken will be slightly different, depending on their size, the building, and how many pupils there are, however things like how you get around your school, the organisation of timetables and arrangements for breaks and toilets are likely to have changed.

Your school will share these changes with you and will be happy to answer any questions you may have.



SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

SCHOOLS will be contacting parents of pupils with Education Health Care Plans and will involve them in planning for your return.

If you have any questions ask your parent or carer to contact your SENCO.





GETTING TO SCHOOL



IT'S important to think about how you're going to get to school as you may need to make different arrangements.

If your journey is going to be different, you might want to practice it before you go back to school. Here are some tips:

- Walk or cycle if possible – it's healthier, better for the environment and might be quicker too!
- Wash or sanitise your hands as soon as you arrive at school and when you get home;
- Remember that space on public transport is limited – for example, only half the usual number of people are currently allowed on buses. You may need to leave earlier than before to ensure you get to school on time;
- Remember that you need to wear a face covering when using public transport (kids under 11 are exempt);
- Most primary schools now have School Streets, which means that cars are banned from outside schools at opening and closing times;
- Please remember that parents who are dropping off children at primary school may not be allowed on to the school site.

HOW TO KEEP YOURSELF AND OTHERS SAFE

YOU can keep yourself and other family members safe by:

- Listening to, and acting on, your school or college's advice. The Council has been working to support and advise them to help keep you safe;
- Cleaning your hands more often than usual, including when you arrive at school or college, return from breaks, and before and after eating – this can be done with soap and running water or hand sanitiser;
- Stopping the spread of germs – if you cough or sneeze, use a tissue and 'catch it, bin it, kill it';
- Minimising contact and keeping your distance from one another as far as possible;
- Being careful about sharing things like books or stationery;
- Not attending school or college if you – or someone in your household – have coronavirus symptoms. The most common symptoms of covid-19 are all or any of the following: a new continuous cough, a high temperature or fever (37.8 or above) and a loss



- or change in normal sense of smell or taste;
- Using the NHS Test and Trace process so that cases can be identified and action taken – this means that if you

develop symptoms, you should arrange to get a test (you can book online or call 119) and you should inform your school or college of the results of that test.



HELP AND EXTRA SUPPORT

THE past six months have been difficult for everyone, and we know that everyone's experiences have been different.

Many of you will not have been to school since March, and some of you will be returning to a different school. Some of us have lost

loved ones and many will feel anxious about what lies ahead. It's important that we all support each other through this difficult time.

If you need some extra help, that's absolutely fine – there are lots of people who are there to support you. You can always talk to a

teacher at your school, but if you want to speak to someone outside your school, here are some organisations who will be able to help you.

YOUNG HACKNEY SUPPORT

YOUNG HACKNEY CENTRES

Help and support that is easy to access and tailored to your needs. Free. Age: 6-19. Tel: **020 8356 7404**; info@hackney.gov.uk; younghackney.org/advice

PROSPECTS

Get advice about jobs, learning, health, housing, relationships, rights and travel. Free. Age: 8-19 (up to 25 for young people with disabilities). Tel: **020 8356 2664**; prospects.co.uk

CHYPS+ THE HOUSE

CHYPS+ is a one stop shop for health advice and services for young people. We are currently offering phone consultations as a first call, when a nurse will speak to you and book an appointment if needed.

Please do not attend without an appointment as our walk-in clinic remains closed. Free. Age: 11-19. Tel: **020 7683 4070**; chypsplus.nhs.uk

OFF CENTRE

A counselling, art therapy, advice and information service for young people aged 16-25 in City & Hackney. Its services are designed to help young people take greater control over their lives. It offers a range of support, from 1-2-1 counselling and art therapy to advice and key-working. It also runs an art therapy group and an LGBTQI+ youth group. Services are free and confidential. Unit 7, The Textile Building, 2a Belsham Street, E8 6NG. Free. Age: 16-25. Tel: **020 8986 4016**; offcentre.org.uk



CITY AND HACKNEY SUPPORT

CITY and Hackney has a range of emotional and mental health services for children, young people and their families.

These include well-being and counselling services through to specialist adolescent and crisis services. Many schools in Hackney have emotional health and well-being support

on site, and some have mental health support teams. Ask your teacher or SENCO. Visit: cityandhackneycamhs.org.uk

KOOTH

Kooth is a free online counselling service for City and Hackney children and young people aged 11+, and includes well-being communities and advice for families. kooth.com

GROWING MINDS

Growing Minds is a service that aims to improve African, Caribbean and mixed heritage children and young people's emotional health and well-being in City & Hackney, during the important transition years from primary to secondary school and adolescence to adulthood. The project provides culturally aware counselling, emotional and practical support for African, Caribbean and mixed heritage children, young people and their families. Services are for 9-25 year olds and are free and confidential.

info@growingminds.org.uk

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



'I'm worried that by going back to school, I might spread the virus to my family – what should I do?'

It's important to remember that the number of people catching coronavirus has reduced since schools and colleges closed to most pupils back in March, and we now understand more about the measures that need to be in place to create safer environments in schools.

Each school or college will do their own health and safety risk assessment. As part of this, there are certain things that the Government has asked schools and colleges to implement, which are essential to reduce health risks. The Government is asking schools and colleges to ensure they are:

- Managing confirmed cases of coronavirus, in line with current public health guidance – this means pupils may be asked to self-isolate for 14 days by their school or college (based on advice from their

local health protection teams) if they have been in close, face-to-face contact with someone who has tested positive for the virus;

- Ensuring everyone cleans their hands more often than usual, including when they arrive at school or college, when they return from breaks, and before and after eating – this can be done with soap and running water or hand sanitiser;
- Keeping things clean, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces, more often;
- Minimising contact and maintaining distance as far as possible – schools and colleges will decide how best to do this, as it will be different for each setting, but it will generally involve asking pupils to stay within groups or 'bubbles' for younger pupils, and by distancing for older pupils.

'What if I've fallen behind in my work?'

Don't worry – your teachers are there to get you back on track! If you've got any specific concerns, please talk to them. Your school knows this has been a difficult time and will have plans in place to support you.

You will be learning all your usual subjects, although there may need to be changes to some subjects – such as PE and music – to ensure they can be delivered as safely as possible. Schools and colleges will also make plans for remote education where needed, to ensure that the small number of children and young people that need to be educated at home, for example, due to shielding or self-isolation, are given the support they need to continue learning.

'Is now the right time to go back to school?'

Some young people have not been to school for six months. We know this has been difficult for families, and especially young people, and it is really important that you get back to school to keep on track with your learning and development and also for your well-being. School and college attendance will again be mandatory from the beginning of the new academic year. This means that parents and carers of children of compulsory school age have a legal duty to make sure they attend. If you are unable to attend school or college because you are self-isolating or for any other reason, parents or carers should talk to your school or college about what support is in place in terms of home learning.

'I'm anxious about returning to school after so long. Who can I talk to?'

You are not alone! Many children have not been at school since the end of March and teachers are prepared for this.

Schools will be doing everything they can to make things as familiar as possible. If you have specific concerns about returning to school you should contact your tutor, teacher or pastoral support leader in your school to talk through anything they can do to help. There are also a range of support organisations and options available (see above).