

Welcome back to ACE



Getting ready for school reopening

Wednesday 2nd September

Welcome back to Ashford CE Primary School!

Since March, schools across England have been closed to keep children and staff safe from COVID 19. We have really missed you!

You have all been busy doing your learning from home for the past few months and now the Government have said it is safe for you to return to school.

We look forward to welcoming you all back on Wednesday 2nd September.

School may look and be organised a little differently to what you are used to.

Our staff have been working very hard to get school ready for you to return to our new normal. We have put together some information to help alleviate any concerns or worries that you may have, as well as some resources if you are finding things a bit tricky.

We have all had different experiences of lockdown and have felt differently. That is ok! Some of you may be really excited and ready to come back to school and some of you may be feeling a bit anxious or worried. That is fine and we are all in this together. Your friends, teachers and all the staff are very excited to see you back at school and we are all here for you if you have any concerns.

Returning to school – What has been done so far?

- The well being of our school community is our first priority and our aim before the summer was provide you with as much information about school reopening as we possibly can.
- If you haven't already read through our reopening plan or risk assessments, then please see the school website for further details.
- To support all stakeholders we wanted to offer all of our pupils the opportunity to return to school before the summer break, hopefully enabling them to get some closure on what has been an incredibly challenging academic year. This also gave them the chance to see their friends and teachers, as well as getting an insight into how school is going to look and operate during school reopening. We hope that those of you who chose to take us up on this opportunity found it to be useful and has helped prepare your child for the forthcoming year.
- On top of our transition Zoom sessions that your child's new class teacher held before the summer break, we are also going to be easing our children back into school life with a huge focus on getting to know you activities, as well as a focus on mental health and wellbeing.
- The whole school has had a thorough deep clean over the summer break, as well as some maintenance work and re-decoration.
- We hope that receiving all the information about school reopening and how this would look before the end of term was useful but we are sure that there are still some questions that you may have.
- Staff have been incredibly busy during the holiday organising classrooms in line with government guidance. They have also been preparing transition information and planning activities to ease children back into school life as well as lessons supporting their mental health and wellbeing.

Timings – Staggered start and end to the day to ensure as much social distancing as possible and ease contact and congestion.

	Start	Finish
Reception	8.30 am	2.40pm
Year 1/ 2	8.40am	2.50pm
Year 3/ 4	8.50am	3.05pm
Year 5/6	9am	3.20pm

- Children will enter through the classroom doors, with the exception of Year 5 and 6 who will go up to class via the main door in the junior playground and use the stairs.
- There will be signage to show you where to go.
- There will be a member of staff to greet the children and give them hand sanitizer on entrance.
- If you have any questions please ask a member of the Senior Leadership team. One will be present at the main gate each day.
- We kindly ask that families are prompt with timings and leave the school site as soon as they have dropped off or collected their children.

Uniform and PE kit

For those of you who attended school before the summer holidays either in the key worker groups or in our optional year group return weeks, you will be aware that the children did not have to wear school uniform to school. This was to enable regular cleaning of clothes.

As mentioned in our communication prior to the school holidays, children are expected to return in full school uniform, as well as school PE kit.

Unlike in normal times, we ask that the children do not bring in or leave their PE kits in school. Instead, we ask that children come dressed in PE kit on their allocated PE days. Times of these will be out shortly. As we are keen to encourage as much outside activity as possible we do ask that children have a full school PE kit for these days. (See school website for further information)

How do our classrooms look?



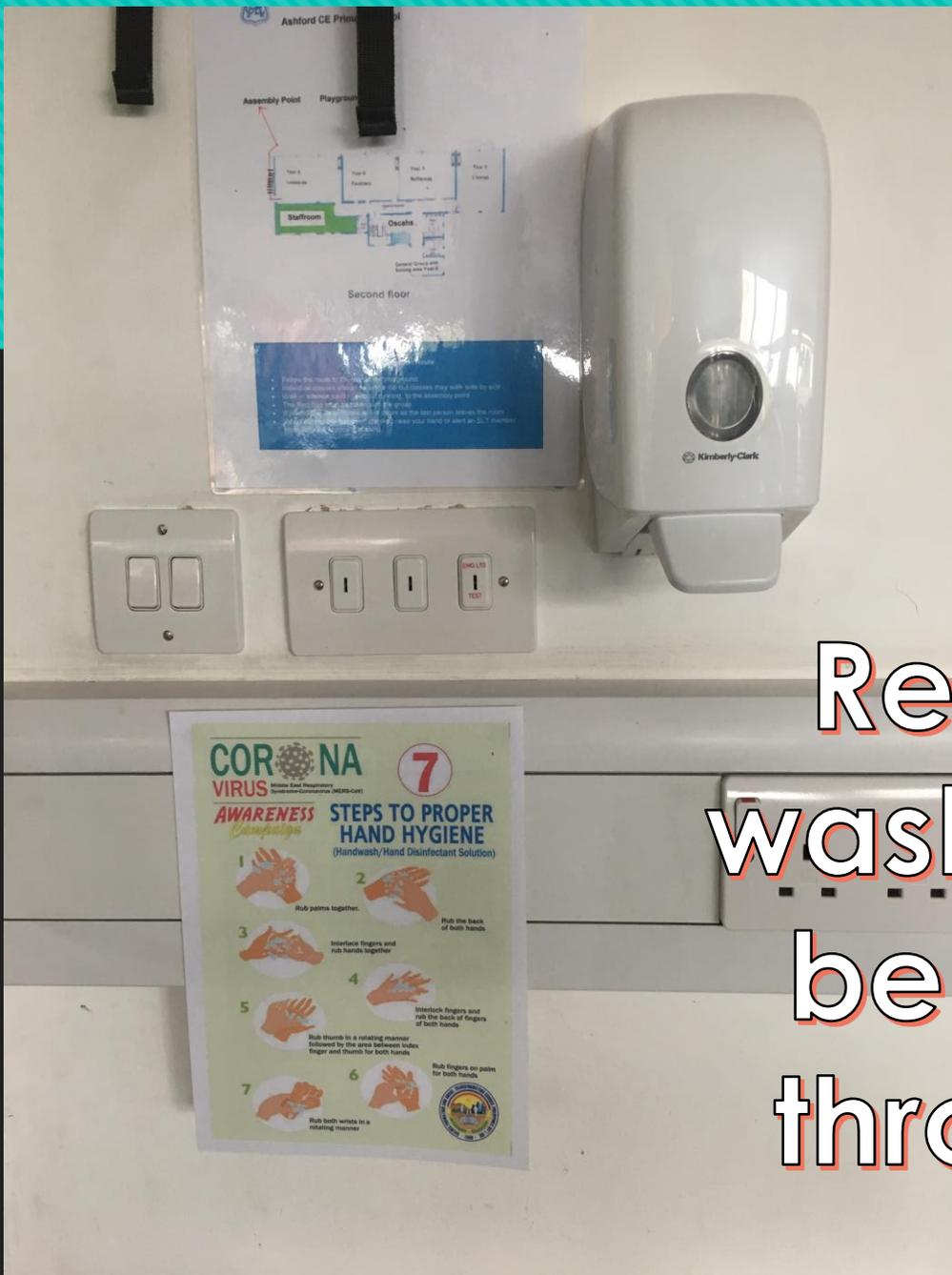
All of our classrooms have been set up in line with government guidance.

Tables have been organised so they are all forward facing and in most cases are in rows.

Children will have a designated seat allocated to them by the class teacher. Individual resources have been prepared for our pupils. Key stage 2 children also have the option to bring in their own pencil cases.

Each classroom also has a wall mounted sanitising station located by the door for quick and easy use.

Regular hand washing time will be factored in throughout the day.



Our first week back.

What are we offering our pupils ?

Everyone's experience of lockdown has been different and we appreciate the way that our families and community will be feeling about returning to school on Wednesday will also vary greatly.

Many of your children will have adapted to the new normal well and will be geared up and ready to go. Others may be finding this an incredibly difficult time and may struggle with adapting to the school day.

Our aim is to be there for all of our pupils, families and wider community. As a result the first week of school will be focussed on:

- An introduction to new routines and rules.
- Getting to know you activities.
- Mental health and well being activities planned across the school and tailored for each year group.
- Carefully planned timetable with 'brain breaks' factored in to help build learning stamina.
- Worship - both in class and virtual.
- PE sessions from the first week. (These will not be in your child's regular slot, this is simply for the first week back to utilise time outside).

Feeling anxious or unsure?

Both you and your children may be feeling unsure about school reopening on Wednesday. We completely understand and want you to know that we are here for you. We have collated some resources that may be useful to use with your children if you have found it challenging to talk about Covid-19 and the effects it has had on you as a family.

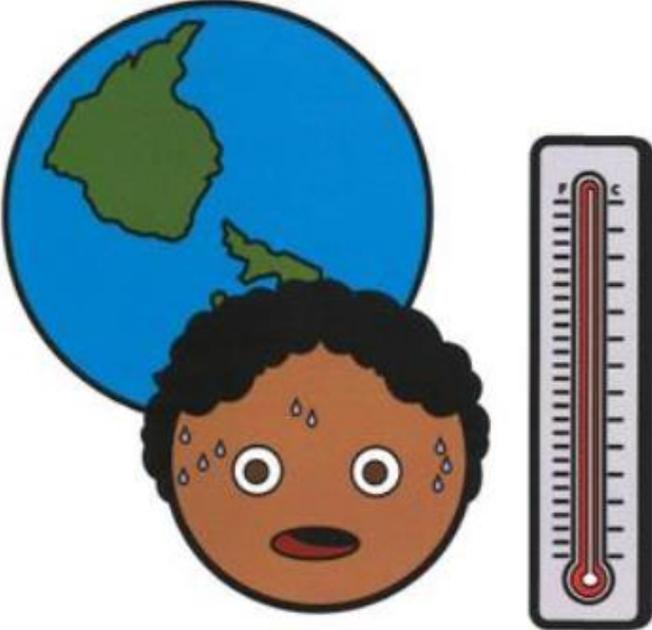
Children respond well to facts, but it is important to get the right balance.

Not sure how to start the conversation with your child, or worried that they won't engage? Try having a go at the following things:

Social stories – Social stories offer visual prompts to help children understand complicated and emotional topics. We often use these resources in school to support a wide range of needs; however they are great tools that help all children understand.

WWW.THEAUTISMEDUCATOR.IE

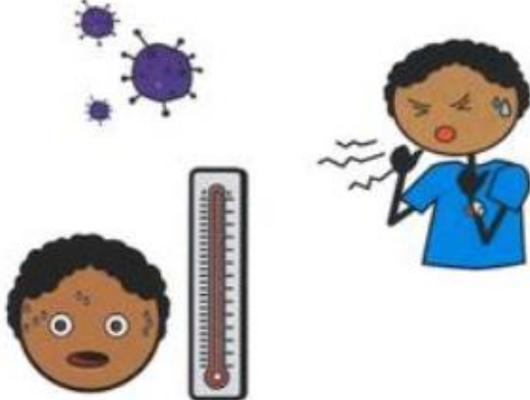
WHAT IS THE CORONAVIRUS?



Written by Amanda Mc Guinness

WWW.LITTLEPUDDINGS.IE

The Coronavirus is a virus that can make people feel unwell.



The Coronavirus can also be called "COVID-19".

COVID-19 / CORONAVIRUS

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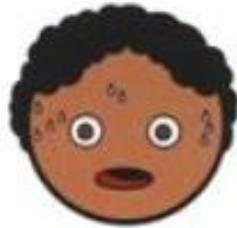


People who have the
Coronavirus may have:



Sore Throat/
Dry Cough

Fever



Shortness of breath



Most people who have the
Coronavirus will stay at home
to get better.

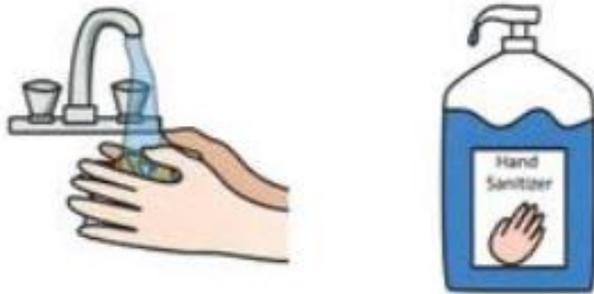
Some people who have the
Coronavirus will go to the hospital
to get better.



I can help stop the spread of germs by washing my hands with soap and water.

I can take my time when I wash my hands, making sure I wash between my fingers and all over my hands.

If I can't use soap I can use Hand Sanitizer.



There will be NO School for



School will reopen again.



I will stay at home while school is closed.



I will complete school-work /homework while I am at home.



I know that I will be safe and I don't have to feel afraid.

I will be safe and happy at home with my family.

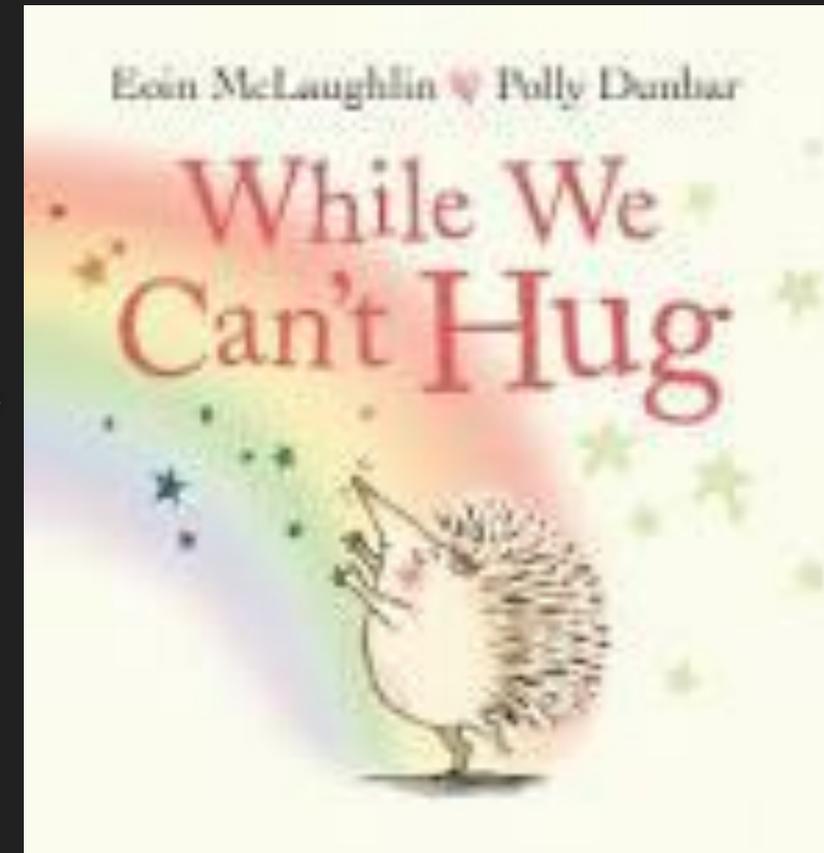


Pros and cons lists – This simply helps with starting a conversation. Discuss what have been the positives of Lockdown, focussing on the positive experiences, activities, or skills they have acquired. Do one yourself and make comparisons.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read more books• Daily walks together• Appreciated my food more• Blessed to have the technology to communicate with friends and family• Feeling closer to my neighbours• Clapping for the NHS• Raised money for charity• Made the best banana bread - ever!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Couldn't go to school• Didn't see my friends and family for a while• My favourite places were closed.• Worried about friends and family catching coronavirus.

Try reading a story book to get the children talking about how they are feeling.

- During our first week back, some classes will be doing work on the new children's story 'While We Can't Hug' by Eoin Mclaughlin.
- [While we can't hug \(YouTube\)](#)
- This is a very sweet story about Hedgehog and Tortoise who are the very best of friends, but have not been able to socialise, or even hug each other for a while.
- It is a great way to talk through your lockdown experiences with your children. Children can talk about their feelings and emotions through the characters, including how seeing their friends back at school may make them feel.



Looking for some more ideas or ways to start conversations?

We understand that over the weekend, as school return creeps closer, that some of your children may start to have changed feelings about school return.

If the activity ideas suggested so far aren't your cup of tea, try taking a look at some of the links and resources added to this page.

There are activity ideas that you can do as a family, stories, as well as advice for parents and ways to support your children during their transition back to school.

We hope that you will find these useful and supportive.

We are all in this together!

Mental health and wellbeing are key focusses for our whole school community.

We understand that some children and young people may be experiencing feelings such as anxiety, stress or low mood as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Please let a member of staff know if you have any concerns and remember we are all in this together. Here are some useful websites and free online resources available to help you and your child with mental health, including:

- [MindEd](#), a free educational resource from Health Education England on children and young people's mental health
- [Rise Above](#), which aims to build resilience and support good mental health in young people aged 10 to 16
- [Every Mind Matters](#), which includes an online tool and email journey to support everyone to feel more confident in taking action to look after their mental health and wellbeing
- [Bereavement UK](#) and the [Childhood Bereavement Network](#), provide information and resources to support bereaved pupils, schools and staff

We hope that this information is useful and can support you in getting your child ready to return to school.

We hope you have had a great summer holiday and we can't wait to see you!

- **School starts on Wednesday 2nd September.**
- **Full uniform to be worn into school. (Full PE kit on PE days).**
- **Please see previous guidance for timings and further details of the school's reopening plan.**
- **Please return any school reading books that you may have at home.**
- **KS2 may bring in their own pencil cases and stationery.**
- **Children will need their own water bottle and a piece of fruit for break time snack. KS1 will have fruit provided.**