

Tuesday 7th September 2021

Welcome to a new academic year – 2021 / 2022

Dear parents and carers,

Welcome back to a new year. We are so pleased to welcome new pupils and new staff.

Joining us are:

Miss Christie – Miss Christie worked at Highfields a few years ago and we are delighted to have her back! She is even with the same class – who she worked with in Year 2! She is now in Year 6 with Mr Williams.

Miss Eggleston – Miss Eggleston joins us as our new Finance Officer, so you may see her on Reception or speak to her on the phone.

Mr Lancashire – Mr Lancashire, also re-joins us in Year 3/4 , after working with us last year.

Mrs Slater – Mrs Slater will be working as a TA in Year 5 with Miss Brown.

Miss Spencer – Miss Spencer is our new teacher in Year 1.

Please join me in giving them a warm Highfields welcome!

Please remember that Miss Hepworth is our new Learning Mentor, supporting attendance and pastoral matters.

I would also like to thank all staff for the work they have done to get the school ready for our pupils. This includes all of our site staff and support staff, and our teachers. The school is looking beautiful and we hope to be able to allow people back into school soon so you can see the transformation.

The pupils have returned with a really positive attitude and have settled back into school smoothly. Well done to all of the children, staff and parents.

School dinners

Please note that children are able to start school lunches at any time. Please call the office to arrange this. You can decide on the day, but notice is preferable. We strongly encourage school dinners as they provide a balanced meal, they are more cost effective and it also reduced the burden on families to prepare packed lunches every day.

If you are sending packed lunches, please remember that the children do not need large amounts of food. A sandwich, a snack and a piece of fruit/yoghurt are more than enough.

Please remember that sugary drinks are not allowed due to the damage they cause to young teeth. These are fine at home in moderation as children can clean their teeth. Sugary drinks will be returned to parents.

Term time holidays

Whilst we do not authorise term time holidays, unless there is an exceptional reason, we really do appreciate families letting us know when they are going away. We have a duty to visit families if we do not see them in person by the third day of absence, unless we know where they are e.g. on holiday. This is due to lessons learned from serious case reviews, including instances where children have been harmed or worse, killed. It is part of our safeguarding responsibility. If we do not hear from family by the end of the third day, we are obligated to take this further, e.g. ask the Police to conduct a safe and well check. By informing us of holidays or other reasons for absence, this stops people chasing families with calls and visits that are unnecessary. Thank you to families who have taken an open and honest approach around this, we really do appreciate this.

Note if you do wish to take a term time holiday, you must complete a request form as this forms part of the local authority's decision process on whether to issue a fixed penalty notice.

Events calendar

Next week we will be sending out the schedule of events we are planning. This is subject to change and will probably expand through the year, but we would like to give you some key dates in advance. You will see key dates for assessments, so please note these dates and ensure that children attend school.

Covid update

Earlier in the week I emailed a letter from Public Health which explained the new rules around isolation when there is a positive Covid case either in school or within homes. Please read this and let us know if you are unsure of anything. We are always able to give advice to parents if they are unsure about anything, so please call us.

Afterschool clubs

Children have missed out on lots of opportunities to have fun, socialise and learn new skills in the last year. So, we have arranged after school clubs on every night of the week apart from Fridays. Please see the information sheet that has been sent with this letter. Some clubs have limited numbers, so they will be allocated on a first come first serve basis, but we will seek to repeat popular clubs later in the year. These will begin WC13th September.

Reading Records

Please ensure that reading records come into school every day and that children are reading at least three times a week at home. Please sign their reading record to show that they have read.

Building Works

As you know, we are having some work done on the school Reception. We are hoping this will start in the next few weeks. In the meantime, thank you for your patience with the new pick up and drop off arrangements. It was nice to hear that some people prefer the new method.

Please try not to crowd closely to the gate as we need to be able to see everyone and this will aid getting children out as quickly and safely as possible.

We are still organising how the Reception will function when the works start, but if you need to attend school you will need to phone ahead to inform staff so that they can greet you. The works should last between 5-7 weeks.

We are also looking into developing our onsite kitchen, so that we can deliver meals directly from our site which is exciting. This is also likely to happen this year – but we will keep you updated.

Kind regards,
Mrs Sercombe