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4th September, 2020

Autumn Term

First day of the Autumn term will be Monday 7th September, 2020.

Holywell is a NO NUT Zone.

Dear parents and carers

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. We hope that you have had a lovely summer break and were able to enjoy family time within the "new norm". We are ready to welcome all our children back to school at last and are feeling very excited at the prospect of getting back to some sense of normality. We are really looking forward to seeing all the children again and hearing about their adventures. We particularly want to extend a special welcome to our new children and families, some of whom we have not actually met yet! We welcome our new children into reception in Robins Class and other new children across the school.

We are thrilled to announce that we have started to move into the new school office. This has freed up vitally needed space in the staffroom area for children to be able to work in groups, receive interventions and provides a lovely meeting area. This is going to make a huge difference to us all. What a lovely start to the new school year!

In opening school, we have three main priorities:

- The safety of our children and staff by ensuring that we follow health and safety guidance through assessing risks and putting in place control measures
- The mental health and wellbeing of children and the school community in the transition back to school
- Ensuring that all children receive a high-quality education that enables them to thrive and progress in all areas

Staff have been working very hard to provide a safe, welcoming and happy school for your children. We are very grateful to you all for working so closely with us and for all your kind words and support. I want to now update you on some key school procedures prior to next week, in response to our latest risk assessment and government guidance released last week. I thank you for your patience in waiting for this further information.

Please find attached to this newsletter information from HM Government 'Returning to Primary School: what parents need to know'.

Please copy and paste the link below which provides further information for parents and carers about going back to school, nurseries and colleges in the autumn term.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Newsletter

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I am writing to remind you about the arrangements for the beginning of the new academic year. All children from Reception to Y6 are expected to return to school on Monday 7th September. The risk assessment will be reviewed and regularly updated to mitigate risks of the transmission of the virus and will be placed on our school website for the start of the new term.

The information below summarises the main points in the risk assessment and is very similar to that that was sent out on the last day of term in July. Any changes are coloured in green. We hope you find this information useful:

When will the children start back at school?

- Children in Reception to Y6 will start back at school on Monday 7th September.

Do they need to wear uniform?

- Yes, we expect all children to wear full uniform if possible.
- Children will need their PE kit in a small bag that can be hung on their peg
KS1 (Robins & Hedgehogs) PE Kit to consist of trainers/plimsolls only. These are to be left in school until half term
KS2 (Foxes & Squirrels) Full PE Kit in a PE bag. These are to be left in school until half term

What can be brought from home?

- Children may bring a small bag to school however, they are not allowed to bring unnecessary items from home. They must only bring a named water bottle, healthy snack, sunscreen, sunhat and packed lunch if required

What measures are in place to reduce mass gatherings of parents and children at the start and end of school?

- Staggered start and finish times will be applied for all children. Each class enters school through the school gate at staggered times
Squirrels at 8.45am;
Foxes at 8.50am;
Hedgehogs at 8.55am
Robins at 9.00am
Parents and children to wait outside gate on gravel at allocated time (not before) socially distancing. Parents to not arrive too early and then leave school site as soon as possible.
- **Each class will leave at home time at allocated time**
Robins 3.00pm;
Hedgehogs 3.05pm;
Foxes 3.10pm;
Squirrels 3.15pm
- When children arrive in school they will be asked to sanitise their hands and go to their classrooms. They will hang their belongings up in an allocated space in the cloakroom and they will be asked one by one to wash their hands
- Please can we ask parents NOT to congregate on or around the school site before or after school.
- All adults must always maintain social distancing to reduce the chance of transmitting the virus.
- It is essential that all children arrive and leave at their designated start or finish time.
- If parents in Key Stage two want children to walk home alone, please inform the school office of this information by the start of the term.

- When waiting to collect children, parents and other adults must keep any other children close to them and please do not allow them to move away from the adult.
- Please do not send children to school too early as this could potentially lead to unsupervised contact between pupils.
- No parent to enter the school ground if possible
- The school office will be closed to parents on the whole – so please phone or e mail.
- Thank you for your support with this.

What hygiene measures are in place? What are you doing to keep the school clean?

- We have hygiene boxes in each classroom, including cleaning products and equipment. Surfaces are cleaned regularly and all equipment is cleaned in between use.
- Children are expected to wash their hands/ sanitise multiple times throughout the day; members of staff will be available to support and supervise handwashing where it is appropriate, and we have visual reminders in all the toilets and sink areas about good handwashing.
- We have plenty of tissues and remind children about good hygiene.

How will you make sure children are socially distant with each other?

- Children have been organised into class groups that will stay with each other for most of their time in school. We call these 'pods'.
- Playtimes will be staggered so that fewer children are outside on the playgrounds with each class having their own designated area to play within. This way, the classes will not routinely mix with each other. They will have their own play equipment in their zone.
- Children will not move around the site as much as they used to however, when they do, they will be encouraged to social distance
- We recognise that social distancing with the younger children is a challenge so we will remind them regularly about it, but we cannot guarantee that it can be maintained with the younger children. The government guidance states that schools do not need to insist on social distancing with the younger children. We want our children to learn through play and interaction with others.

How will staff social distance?

- Staff will continue to maintain 1m+ social distancing wherever possible. Our staffroom will not be used for staff to congregate and our school office is out of bounds to all if possible.
- We ask that parents do not come into the school building to maintain good social distancing, however we are still available to talk to parents either over the phone or through email.

What will the classrooms look like?

- The classrooms do look a bit sparser than they usually do, this is so that the surfaces are easily cleaned.
- In Years 3 to 6, most desks have been arranged into front facing rows.
- Teachers are planning learning activities that reduce the need for close face to face interaction.
- Adults will give feedback to the children at the adults' level rather than the adult moving to the child's level.
- In Reception, we will allow a more 'free flow' approach to the provision so that the children can learn through play. They will be allowed to sit on the carpet in small groups but will be expected to distance themselves as much as possible.

What equipment will be available to the children? What will they need to bring from home?

- All children will be given their own pencil case with their own equipment because they are not allowed to share equipment such as pens and pencils.
- Any equipment that does need to be shared will be cleaned thoroughly in between uses.

- Children will be expected to bring a named water bottle to school. This will stay on their desk to reduce movement around the classroom.
- Reading books will be sent home. They will be cleaned after they have been returned and will only be permitted to go back onto bookshelves after 72 hours.

Do the normal rules and expectations still apply?

- Absolutely! We always have very high expectations for behaviour and attitude.

How will you make sure the children settle into their new class and teachers? How are you going to support their wellbeing after such a difficult time?

- The activities for the first two weeks of term will be planned to support the transition for everyone. We understand lots of our children will not have been in school for over five months, so the teachers are planning to take their time to make sure the children can settle in. The children will revisit our school motto, values and expectations including our Building Learning Powers.
- The whole school will support the wellbeing and mental health of all our pupils.

Although we will be making school as normal as we can, there will be number of things that are different, and this is to keep everyone as safe as we can. This includes:

- No large gatherings will take place such as assemblies in the hall – we will have these in classes instead
- Parents will not be allowed on site so communications will need to be made via the office through email or phone
- There will be no extra curriculum clubs for at least the first half of term but likely to be for the whole of the Autumn term

How will you help the children to 'catch up'?

- Over the next year, our curriculum and timetable will be more flexible to respond to the different needs of the children who return to school. We will prioritise their wellbeing and emotional response to the pandemic by including lots of personal and social education, wellbeing, creative arts and outdoor learning as well as Reading, Writing and Maths.
- When the children have settled in, their teachers will assess them all over the first few weeks and will plan support for anyone who needs additional help.
- All teachers have reviewed the curriculum and adjusted plans so that it enables the children to repeat aspects they may need to, but also supports rapid progress.
- Our teachers have been working hard to plan the new curriculum for the next school year; we have re-written many of the topics.
- Reading is so very important, so please try and hear your child read as much as possible.

What will happen at lunchtime?

- A slightly restricted lunch menu will initially be available
- Hot lunches will be served to the children and they will eat with the rest of the children in their pod.
- We do encourage all children to have a school meal because they are fresh, well balanced with locally produced ingredients
- As normal, lunches will be booked in advance.
- Children can bring a packed lunch; please can you ensure the lunch box is cleaned thoroughly every day.

What happens if a child gets ill in my child's group?

- No child or adult showing signs of infection are allowed on the premises.
- Staff and pupils are required to have immediate tests if they show symptoms. If a child is sent home with symptoms, we ask parents arrange a test for the child.
- Any child who displays any symptoms of COVID must be collected immediately. When the child is awaiting collection, they will be moved to our isolation room.

- The adult supervising the child will wear full PPE clothing when dealing with a suspected case; this includes a face mask, face shield/ visor, apron and gloves.

What if my child, or one of our family members, becomes ill?

- If any child in school tests positive for COVID, every child and member of staff in their group will be required to self-isolate for 14 days.
- If a member of a child's household tests positive for COVID, the child and the household members must self-isolate for 14 days. The other children and staff in the child's group do not have to self-isolate.

The government guidance states that all children will be expected to attend school from September and we want to work with any parents who are worried to reassure you that we are taking every precaution to keep our community safe.

We also need to be prepared to change our plans at short notice as this is an ever-changing situation so we do need to be prepared for different scenarios on our return.

We know many parents have been affected by the St Michaels sadly but understandably being unable to offer Breakfast Club and After School Club for the next few weeks/ months. School is looking into whether we can offer a temporary solution and will let you know if we can asap.

Everyone's health and safety is our priority and we hope that, by reading this document, all parents and families are reassured that the school staff are taking every possible measure to create a happy, healthy and safe learning environment for all our community.

BC/ASC

School will now seem a slightly different place in terms of its organisation, but our standards and our drive for learning will still be there. Our children need support, stability and routine. We expect there will be some pupils who will be nervous and anxious about returning to school after such a prolonged absence from the physical school site. For some, the anxiety may extend beyond the normal fears about returning to school and starting a new school year. All staff will be spending the first few weeks establishing the 'new normal' for children so that they feel secure and confident to be back at school.

We very much look forward to seeing you all on Monday. If you have any worries or concerns, please contact school and we will do everything we can to support you.

With very best wishes

Parent Pay

As previously notified, all payments **must** now be made by parent pay and we are **unable** to take cash payments, if you have not yet logged onto parent pay and have lost your username and password can you please email and we will get this sent out to you.

Free Nasal Childhood Flu Vaccination

Your child is due to be in Reception to Year 6 from September 2020 and they are therefore eligible for a Free Nasal Childhood Flu Vaccination.

It is anticipated that this will be delivered in schools between October 2020 to December 2020, this will be administered adhering to all up to date Infection Control, PPE and social distancing guidance at the time.

Flu vaccination is one of most effective interventions we have to reduce pressure on the health and social care system which is going to be more important than ever this year. For this reason, it is essential we deliver the vaccine to as many children as possible to prevent the spread of infection to those most at risk in society.

In light of the above we are expecting demand to be high and therefore we urge you to follow the below link to consent to your child's vaccination now. You will also find answers to your FAQ's on this link.

<https://schoolimms.virginicare.co.uk/flu/2020/devon>

If you have any difficulties with completing the consent form, please contact the Immunisation Team on our Single Point of Access (SPA).

News from the PTA



Thank you for helping us raise funds through easyfundraising. Please remember to use this link next time you shop online! <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/friendsofholywellschool/?invite=qxe9k8&referral-campaign>

Would you like to help create and reserve a copy of our limited edition fundraising 2021 calendar? <https://forms.gle/QvttFWcfzn1BpeA2A>

Op Shop

If you have or require any good quality, secondhand school uniform please contact Hazel Malin on 07974 208835
Thank you for your support.