



## HIGH HESKET C of E SCHOOL (VC)

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Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents,

I am afraid I am writing with another lengthy letter! However, there are lots of pieces of information to share with you and I am keen to keep everyone as updated as I can with the current circumstances. There is a real range of news within today's correspondence applicable to lots of different year groups within school so please read carefully.

### **Return to school for Years 2-5**

This week, the Government have withdrawn their plans to have all year groups returning to school before the Summer holiday as they have recognised the practical implications this has for schools in terms of space and staffing whilst social distancing measures are in place. Unfortunately, you will have seen from my previous letters that this has been one of the main obstacles for us in our ability to return Early Years, Year 1 and Year 6 promptly. We are really devastated that we won't get to see all of the children in person before the end of the academic year but want to reassure you that you are all in our thoughts. The staff are hoping to plan another whole class Zoom meeting before the end of term so as we can still see everyone face to face in some capacity!

### **Home learning resources and contact**

I know from personal experience how challenging it is to juggle home learning alongside work commitments and I do want to stress that the materials we offer are to be used in whatever way works best for your personal set of circumstances. We are also keen to ensure we maintain contact with all of our families and I know the teachers have been reaching out via the homework email or Tapestry to try and keep communication flowing. It really brightens our day when we see photographs or hear from our families and it also reassures us that everyone is still part of our community. The teachers will be getting in touch with anyone we haven't heard from in a while just as a quick 'check in' so if we haven't had any contact with you recently, you may receive a quick phone call or email from a member of staff. These aren't to add any pressure to our families and are not to check up on home learning; they are just to make sure everyone is keeping well and to see whether we can offer any help in any way.

### **Baby news!**

It is with absolute delight that I have some wonderful news to announce. Miss Baird, our Higher-Level Teaching Assistant who currently works in Year 5, is expecting a baby in September and we are thrilled to be able to share this news with you all. As a result, Miss Baird will be on maternity leave once the new academic year begins and, once we know better about how school will be organised in September, we will be arranging her maternity cover.

### **Next year...**

We are still unsure as to how school will operate next academic year and, as we move towards the end of the term, there are calls for schools to receive clear guidance from the government so as we can prepare fully for September. Although we do not yet know how classes will be organised, we have made the decision that, wherever possible and if guidance allows, class teachers will remain in the same year groups as they have this year. We did have a reorganisation of staffing last September but feel that, with all of the changes this year, it would be prudent to keep teachers in the same year groups to provide an element of stability. Of course, this is wholly dependent on government plans. This means that the teaching staff will be as follows:

Nursery – Miss Carruthers  
Reception – Miss Rennie  
Year 1 – Miss Digidan  
Year 2 – Miss Blenkarn  
Year 3 – Miss Little  
Year 4 – Mr Andrews  
Year 5 – Miss McDermott  
Year 6 – Mrs Day and Mrs Ager

### **Return to school for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6**

A huge thank you to all parents in these year groups who have returned their survey responses so promptly. This has enabled us to produce a plan for the next few weeks although, as I'm sure you can appreciate, it is a proposal only and is extremely dependent on staffing numbers and risk assessment guidance. It is also dependent on Key Worker requests as government guidance dictates we must prioritise Key Worker children over the return of any new year groups. I am incredibly grateful to everyone's patience as I am aware it has taken considerable time to finalise our approach, however this has been down to the complexity of the arrangements we need to put in place.

For those families who have indicated that they wish for their child to return, we are able to offer a return to school as outlined below:

**Year 1:** Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020

**Reception:** Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020

We do appreciate that this does not enable either year group to return for the full amount of time before the summer holidays but we hope you understand that we have done our very best to provide as much face to face contact as we safely can. A separate letter for each year group will be sent out to outline specific arrangements and this will only be sent to those parents who have requested that their child return. We have also taken into consideration those families in these year groups who are currently accessing our Key Worker provision and will be in touch to explain our plans individually.

As I have explained before, staffing numbers and space within school are a real limitation for us to be able to return all year groups full time but we are also aware that a large number of our Year 6 cohort have requested a return to school in some capacity before the summer. The government guidance states that children should return in groups of no more than 15 which means that our current cohort will need to be split into two groups. As a result, our plans for a Year 6 return in two groups are as follows:

**Year 6 group 1:** Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020

**Year 6 group 2:** Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2020

I will be in touch to inform Year 6 parents of which group their child will belong to and any further information you may require as soon as possible. We know that this does not provide a huge amount of time back at school for those children and their families who were keen to return. However, we have done our very best to offer at least some time within school as we fully appreciate what an abrupt and unexpected end to Year 6 we experienced back in March. At one point we were unsure as to whether we would be able to provide a return at all so we are thrilled we can offer some face to face contact for those who have requested it.

In addition to this, we are trying to explore possible ways to still provide some form of final ending to the children's time in Year 6. Normally, we would have our usual Leaver's Plays and Church services but the current climate makes this impossible. However, we are looking to still hold some form of farewell activity, which may be done remotely, and this will be open to all Year 6 children, including those who do not return as part of the above plans, and will most likely be held within the final week of term.

**Please note that the above plans are conditional on school capacity, government guidance and our ability to comply with our risk assessments. Should circumstances change, we may not be able to complete the plans as outlined above.**

### **Milk and fruit**

The Government 'Free Fruit for Schools' scheme is unfortunately not available during this current period. We have been trying to provide a fruit snack for the children in school this week but, as numbers increase, we are no longer able to do so I'm afraid. However, if any children attending school over the next few weeks (in Key Worker or year groups) would like to send in a fruit-based snack, you are welcome to do so. The same rules must apply as to packed lunches; all items must be in disposable packaging only. There must also be no nut items in any of the snacks or packed lunch items.

Yours sincerely,  
Mrs A Harvey