



HIGH HESKET C of E SCHOOL (VC)

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Dear Parents,

I am writing to warmly welcome everyone back to the new academic year which begins on Wednesday 2nd September 2020. We are so looking forward to starting the Autumn term with all of our year groups returning and to establish our new routines and ways of working. Our Nursery and Reception families will have received individual information outlining their start dates and we look forward to welcoming our youngest pupils back to school soon.

At the end of term, you will have received a lengthy letter outlining key information about how school will operate in order for us to minimise the risk of COVID-19 as much as possible. The letter can be found on the school website (Parents – Newsletters) and it may be worth re-reading this prior to school reopening to make sure you are familiar with the changes to our usual practice. Some of the key points are reiterated in this letter along with a few additional measures we need to share with you.

The government have recently launched their #BackToSchoolSafely campaign and the most recent Department for Education guidance for parents can be found at <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>

School timings and drop off procedures

A reminder that the school timings have changed and are now as follows:

Early Years and Key Stage 1 will start at 8.35am and finish at 3.10pm.

Key Stage 2 will start at 8.50am and finish at 3.25pm.

Families with children in both Key Stages should drop at the earlier time and collect at the later time. At the end of the day, the younger children should be collected first before older siblings. Parents should not enter the premises in the morning (unless EYFS) but should drop their children at the main school gate or the gate at the top of the field. Year 1 children can access their classroom as they would do normally through the gates near the staff car park. A member of staff will be present at the main school gate.

Parents may enter the school grounds after school to collect their child using the main school gate to enter and the gate at the top of the field to exit. Unfortunately, we do need to ask parents to keep as close to the timings as possible and to maintain social distancing whilst waiting and moving round the grounds. Once children have been collected, we do ask that families leave the grounds promptly. Please collect the youngest sibling first before collecting any older children.

We are also asking all parents to utilise the one-way system when driving through the village (**cars should enter at the Penrith end of the village and leave via the Carlisle end**) so as our staggered approach can run smoothly.

PE Kits / School Uniform

School uniform requirements return to normal but we will be accessing the outdoors as much as possible, even in poor weather. As a result, children should be prepared with suitable footwear and waterproof coats.

Your child will have around two designated PE days each week and we are asking that, on those days only, the children come to school already dressed in their PE kits which they will wear for the day. A reminder that the school PE kit consists of a white t shirt (an optional white t-shirt with the school logo on can be purchased from the Uniform Shop in Carlisle) and black shorts, tracksuit trousers or leggings. The children should come to school in their school sweatshirt/cardigan on these days but may wish to have a change of sweatshirt/hoodie to change in to for the PE session. We do also ask that children have footwear with a suitable sole for outdoors, ideally trainers rather than plimsols. There will be no need for PE kits in the first week, apart from those classes involved in CUFC sessions (see below) and teachers will be in touch to let you know specific PE days soon.

Carlisle United Football Club Outreach sessions

We are delighted that CUFC will be delivering some multi skills sessions this year as part of their school's outreach program. The sessions have been risk assessed and protective measures put in place, such as the sports coaches maintaining social distancing and cleaning of equipment before and after use. In the first half of the Autumn term, Year 2 and Year 4 will both have sessions on Friday afternoons and we are hoping that these will begin on Friday 4th September. Please can children in those year groups prepare to come to school in their PE kit next Friday but we will confirm for definite nearer the time.

Breakfast and After School Club

Thank you to those of you who gave us some indication of requirements for 'Wigglebugs' Breakfast and After School Club. We are still hoping to open from Monday 7th September but will confirm this later this week. We do recognise that requirements may change and are still hoping to have some flexibility if people require last minute bookings although this will be dependent on numbers as we will have slightly more limited spaces to enable us to keep children in their expanded bubbles.

Bubbles and classroom arrangements

As previously explained, schools are operating a 'bubble' approach to avoid different groups of children mixing. Our class year groups will be the children's main bubble but we will also operate 'expanded bubbles' at certain periods (primarily at lunchtime and breakfast/after school club) which will be Y1/2, Y3/4 and Y5/6. Due to the nature of the Early Years setting, Nursery and Reception will form one consistent 'bubble'. It is important to note that these expanded bubbles will only be used when there are no other alternatives due to space/staffing restrictions and that, even when in use, children from the different year groups will still be kept separate. For example, at lunchtimes, an expanded bubble will be present in the school hall together as we are unable to offer individual sittings but each year group will be seated on separate sides of the hall. At playtimes, expanded bubbles may have playtimes at the same time but the field and/or playground will have designated areas for each year group.

We will also be implementing protective measures to minimise risk further. These will include:

- Regular handwashing
- Increased cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
- Side by side seating arrangements when sitting at tables
- Limited sharing of resources or cleaning in between use

Staff have been busy over the holiday period preparing resources and organising classrooms ready for the children to return and we are in the final stages of our organising and cleaning preparations. Staff have worked hard to try and keep the classrooms looking as familiar as possible and the most significant change for some pupils will be the arrangement of desks to allow for the government suggested side by side seating. If any parents or children would like to see the classroom arrangements prior to starting back, each class teacher will post a selection of photographs of the classroom on INSET day, Tuesday 1st September under the class pages on the website. For the children in Early Years, these will be added to Tapestry prior to the children's individual start dates.

Lunch and snack arrangements

The school kitchen will be operating as usual in September although we will be holding additional lunch sittings to try and reduce the number of children in the hall at any one time. Children will eat in their expanded bubbles and the menu is currently being reviewed to help us run these sittings as smoothly as possible.

We are expecting the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme to continue in September for all pupils in EYFS and Key Stage 1 so children in these year groups will be provided with a piece of fruit for mid-morning snack each day. Children from Year 3 upwards are welcome to bring in their own small fruit-based snack if they wish but we do ask that these are healthy and free from nuts.

Water bottles

It is more important than ever that children have their own water bottle in school on a daily basis. These can be purchased from school for 50p but children are also welcome to bring one from home. All bottles should be clearly labelled. Our previous arrangement was that water bottles would often remain in school for the week and be filled in school on a daily basis. However, to minimise congestion at the water fountains and to encourage regular cleaning of the bottles, we are asking that for the time being, water bottles are taken home each night and then brought to school the next morning pre-filled with water only. This will help us to minimise large groups at the water fountain although, of course, children will be able to fill their water bottle during the day if needed.

Procedures for illness

It is imperative that children are not brought in to school if they are unwell in any way and, should any member of a family present with symptoms of COVID-19, they should immediately self-isolate and seek testing. If a child presents with any symptoms of COVID-19 at school, no matter how mild, we will need to contact parents and send the child home. We fully appreciate that this can cause inconvenience at times but our priority is the safety of pupils and staff. A confirmed positive test in school will require the bubble, or possibly the expanded bubble, to close.

Contact details / Track & Trace

It is important that we hold up to date contact details so please inform us if there have been any recent changes. Should the school be notified of a positive case within our school community, we will need to contact the local health protection team and may be asked to share this contact information if children have been identified as close contacts of someone with positive symptoms. Further details about this will be shared with you soon.

Curriculum

We will be in touch after the start of term to share key updates relating to our curriculum and any revisions we may be making to the content or resources we use. Our focus for the first few days is to settle the children in to their new year groups and to provide them with high quality opportunities to share, explore and learn. The first two weeks of term will include a whole school project using materials from the Cumbria Development Education Centre which include using the text 'When I coloured the World' as a stimuli for some engaging and enjoyable activities.

I am sure you can appreciate that we are all working within new ways and procedures so we may need to reflect and revise on our measures as time goes on. We very much appreciate your patience and I would like to stress that we are very open to discussing anything at all, especially if you have any concerns or queries. Please feel free to contact us by email or phone to pass on any messages or to make any appointments to speak in more detail. With the support of everyone in our community, we can keep moving forward and working together.

KEY ACTIONS:

- **Follow the drop off and collection arrangements for your child's year group**
- **Use the one-way system through the village when travelling to and from school in vehicles**
- **Utilise the one-way gate system at the end of the school day**
- **Do not gather on the school grounds following drop off or collection and maintain distancing**
- **Do not bring your child to school if they are unwell**
- **Ensure your child has the necessary school uniform, including suitable outerwear clothing and footwear for all weather use of the school field**
- **Prepare for your child to come to school on PE days wearing PE kit**
- **Bring a pre-filled water bottle (water only) to school each day**
- **Reread the September newsletter and Home/School agreement**

Yours sincerely,

Mrs A Harvey