



HIGH HESKET C of E SCHOOL (VC)

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Wednesday 2nd September 2020

Dear Parents.

Welcome to the Autumn term!

It was absolutely wonderful to welcome our children back today and it was such a joyful moment to see so many happy, smiling faces back in their classrooms. We are proud of how positively and independently the children came into school and they have quickly adapted to our new ways of working and their 'bubbles'. I know this is an anxious time and you may have questions or concerns so please feel free to keep communicating with the school via email or telephone if we can help in any way.

Of course, this was the very first day of our new term and our new protective measures and, as is expected, there are small adaptations and changes we need to make now that school is underway and we have put things into practice. As a result, there are a few things that I do need to reiterate or request so as we can continue moving forward together in as smoothly and as safely a way as possible. I would like to extend a huge thank you to all of our parents and children for following our new rules and routines as there have been many changes to be aware of and it is often difficult to keep on top of all of the frequent information we have to send out. **Please do read the information carefully and adhere to the school directions.**

Drop off arrangements in the morning

Today was the first day of school after such an extended period and many of you will have wanted to arrive early to familiarise yourselves with the new arrangements and see the children go into school on the first day back. However, moving forward, **I do need to request that children do not arrive at the school gate until their specific designated start time (8.35am and 8.50am)**. It is imperative that we avoid any congestion or groups outside on the path so it is not possible to arrive early and wait as you would do usually. Please arrive promptly at the time, send your child directly through the gate and then move immediately away to allow others to enter. The children were absolutely brilliant at coming through the gate independently and we are sure this will continue as they get even more used to the routine.

Children in Key Stage 2 should only arrive before 8.50am if they have a sibling in EYFS or Key Stage 1. The staff are busy setting up for the day and finalising our protective safety measures in each class, so we have limited staff available to supervise the older children. A reminder that the large gate at the bottom of the field will also be open and children are welcome to enter through this if you would like an alternative entrance. For older children, such as Year 5 and Year 6, this would make an ideal entrance for them to use.

Collection arrangements in the afternoon

This will be the busiest time of our school day and the time when large groups of adults are present on the school grounds so this is the time when we need to be most vigilant. **It is essential that parents maintain social distancing whilst collecting their children and that any siblings stay next to their parents.** Please enter via the main school gate and exit via the top field gate IMMEDIATELY after collecting your children. If children in Key Stage 2 have been directed to leave the grounds independently, please advise the class teachers of this and be aware that they will be exiting at the top of the field so parking in this area would be ideal for safety.

Please also ensure that the one-way system through the village is used so as all cars are travelling in the same direction. This particular system was put into place under the advice of the police several years ago and will be essential now that we have two different end times to the school day. We will be continuing to review this over the coming days and weeks.

Please collect all siblings at the designated time for the oldest child. We will hold younger children in their classes until this time. This will be important for minimising traffic and ensuring we do not have adults waiting on site unnecessarily.

One-way system through the village

This morning's traffic was noticeably quieter and I am very grateful to everyone who followed our one-way system through the village (entering Penrith end, leaving Carlisle end). This is going to really assist with our new routines but will also make a significant impact on our historical parking and congestion difficulties. There were still some cars that did travel against the one-way system, particularly during the afternoon collection which caused some difficulty, so I would be grateful if you could pass on to any friends or relatives who may not have seen the letter that the one-way system is in use.

Face coverings in schools

You may have seen in the news that recently the government released guidance relating to the use of face masks in schools which mostly applies to secondary schools. The updated guidance remains that face coverings are not generally advised in primary settings, apart from in specific circumstances. There will be some occasions when our staff may utilise a face covering, such as when administering first aid at close contact or cleaning as part of our protective measures.

As an added protective measure, some staff may sometimes wear clear face shields at lunchtimes when serving the children in the hall. This will enable us to ensure an added layer of protection when we are serving some of the children at their tables or when assisting children who may need extra help.

School lunches

The revised school menus are now available on the school website to view (Parents – menus) so please take time to look these over and let us know if your child would prefer a jacket potato option. For those children bringing packed lunches, they may now return to using normal lunch boxes and bags and do not require all items to be disposable.

Individual class newsletters

There will be some information that you will require that is specific to each class, such as PE days and times. Years 1-6 will receive a newsletter from their class teachers on Friday 4th September which will outline key information and also provide contact details if you wish to communicate directly with the class teacher now that face to face contact is more limited.

Maths Whizz

For many years, Maths Whizz has been an integral part of our homework schedule and it has been a very useful tool and resource within school and at home. However, the recent emphasis on online learning has meant that we have become familiar with a wider range of similar online platforms and we are currently revising our homework expectations to reflect this. As a result, we will be trialling some different platforms (dependent on each year group) and you will be receiving information about online maths activities from the class teachers in due course.

Hand sanitiser

One of the key ways to protect ourselves in the current circumstances is through regular handwashing. The children will be asked to wash their hands regularly throughout the day and we will also be utilising hand sanitiser at appropriate times. Some children have chosen to bring their own small bottles which can be clipped on a belt or put in their bags which are absolutely fine. We only ask that they do not contain nut oils of any kind and that they are not to be shared with other children.

Weather!

Unfortunately, the weather has taken a turn for this worse and we have had quite a rainy day. We do need the children to be prepared for outdoor playtimes and require the children to have waterproof coat in school at all times during the Autumn term. The weather can change quickly, as was the case today, so please ensure they have suitable clothing and footwear.

KEY ACTIONS:

- **Arrive at school in the morning at the specified time**
- **Utilise one-way system through the village when travelling in cars**
- **Collect children at the time of the OLDEST child in the afternoon**
- **Use the one-way gate system at the end of the school day**
- **Ensure the children have waterproof coats each day**

I am really grateful for your support with this and to everyone who followed our requests from previous letters. It is easy for information to get missed with there being so much to remember at the moment so I thought it was worth reiterating the routines ready for tomorrow. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like anything clarified.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs A Harvey