

Highworth Combined School

Dear all

Thank you for all the emails from children to their new teachers yesterday. We loved hearing from you and cannot wait to see you all in September.

This message is to ensure that you receive the final 'chunk' of information about the return of all children in September. A summary of all the information will be sent tomorrow in the form of a Parental Agreement.

Firstly, a reminder that all children who were in years R to 6 on the 20th March will return to school on 1st September and to their 'old' classrooms (where they were on 20th March). If your child is joining Reception or Nursery in September 2020, start dates are a little different, and you should refer to the letter that we have sent you to understand how the start of the year will work for you.

The Government have made it clear that attendance at school in the Autumn term will once again become statutory and that, in some circumstances, prolonged unauthorised absence could lead to fines being imposed upon parents. I am expecting more guidance on this from Bucks Council and will forward this to you when available.

If you have been informed that your child has health conditions that mean that they are clinically extremely vulnerable, you must seek medical advice to identify if it is safe for them to return to school. Please let us know if you have been told that it is not safe as we will work with you to identify the best way to provide the necessary support for home learning.

Obviously, there will be legitimate and appropriate reasons for absence, especially when children and families have to self-isolate if showing one of the three symptoms of coronavirus, or if told do so because of contact with a positive case of Covid 19. It is therefore very important that you keep us informed of the reasons for absence. We need to ask that you follow this new procedure to report absence as soon as possible on the first day that your child is away:

Email reception@highworthcombined.co.uk with the following information:

- Child's name
- Child's class
- Likely length of absence
- Reason for absence. Please specify whether this is due to:
 - Illness and that this is unrelated to Covid 19
 - Self-isolation due to symptoms of Covid 19, or contact with a positive case

Please do not be offended if we phone you to seek further information or clarification as obtaining this information is a requirement of our new safe ways of working.

The requirements for self-isolation will also affect our staff's ability to be available in school to work. Like all head teachers across the country, I am very concerned about the impact this will have, especially as our usual redeployment of staff to cover absence cannot continue because of the operation of 'bubbles'. In rare circumstances, where we have exhausted all other options, it may be necessary to decide (in conjunction with the Chair of Governors) that we cannot provide safe supervision and have to close a 'year group' bubble. I know that this will be incredibly difficult for parents and carers; I will only ever do this as a last resort.

Provision of 'wrap around care' through Highworth After School Club (HASC) is essential to enable many of you to return to work, but sadly we are not yet able to confirm if this will be in place for September. Further guidance from Government is expected, but not yet available. As soon as they have received this, Marie Petrie and her team will be working to identify how HASC can safely open. Marie will send updates to all parents registered with HASC during the course of the holidays. If you would like to be kept informed, please email Marie on hasc18@hotmail.com

We have devised new ways of working to ensure that First Aid attention can be given, taking account of keeping children and staff in bubbles, and social distancing. It is however essential that, wherever possible, you have given your child medication (e.g. for hay fever) or

applied lotions (e.g. sun protection or cream for eczema) before leaving home in the morning.

In order to limit contact between all members of our community, it will continue to be the case that you will not be able to come in to the school buildings unless there is an emergency involving your child or if you have a prearranged meeting with a member of staff. Please use the intercom, phone or email to let us know how we can assist you.

Once again, my thanks for taking the time to read and understand a very long message.

As ever, my very best wishes

Clare Pankhania