Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to the new school year. I really to hope that you have all had a healthy and happy holiday time and enjoyed a little more freedom after another challenging year.

What a lovely morning we have had! The children have all come into school looking smart with big beaming faces; long may this continue! Today, we welcome back our children, families and staff to what will be an exciting term. We also say a warm welcome to our new children and their families. We not only have new children in Reception but also in Year 1 and Year 6. I know that they will soon settle in to life at the Howard.

**New Staff**

I would like to welcome our new members of staff. In Class 3, we welcome Mrs K.Dyer who will be their new class teacher. We also welcome Miss L.Rowland and Mrs. L. Aminu who will be taking over Care Club and will also support lessons and learning in KS2. Miss Rowland will lead morning Care Club and Mrs Aminu will lead afternoons. I know that the children, families and staff will quickly make them feel part of the team.

**Name Changes**

Over the holidays, there have been a few name changes, Mrs Wilkes is now Miss Stretton and Mrs Robertson is now Ms Grainger. The children pick this up much quicker than adults do, and I know they will need to correct me from time to time!

**The School Day**

The school gates open at 8:30 am. Registration closes at 8:40. Where possible, please use the one-way system and adhere to social distancing wherever possible. Just a reminder that on Fridays, school finishes at 3:30 for all children and there is Care Club available until 6pm.

**Enrichment Days and trips**

We are eager to start the new school year and are excited to be able to provide more enrichment experiences for our children. School trips will resume for all year groups and there will be the whole-school trip to the Adventure Farm at some point this term. Remember to check the website for updates.

**Website and Schudio App**

To ensure that you are kept up-to-date, it is extremely useful to download the ***schudio* app**. Here you will be sent push notifications of any important information or updates on the website. Please visit the website regularly to inform you of key dates: <https://www.howard.staffs.sch.uk/events>

**Key Dates this term**

* Monday 13th September is Roald Dahl Day, with a £1 donantion
* Y4 Swimming- letter sent to parents
* Friday 24th September we will be hosting a Macmillan Coffee Morning outside if the weather allows. This will be run by Year 6 and we will be aksing for cake donations.
* In terms of Achievement assembly, this has now been moved to a Monday 3pm-3:25pm. For this half term, we are asking that only parents of children who have been awarded an achievement attend this assembly. Miss Grainger will email you the Monday prior if your child has an award. Our first assembly will be on Monday 13th September 2021. We will review this for Autumn 2 and hopefully we can welcome more parents in the near future.

**Meet the Teacher Evening**

We will have a Meet the Teacher evening on Tuesday 14th September 2021. The times for each class are ; 4:00 - 4:20 Class 3, 4:20 - 4:40 Class 2 and 4:40 - 5:00 Class 1. This is an opportunity for the teachers to introduce themselves, discuss timetables, expectations etc. In this instance, this will be an online meeting. You will be sent a link for this meeting via the office. If you do have any questions or wish to speak to the teacher face to face, then please contact the office to arrange an appointment.

A copy of the teachers’ PowerPoint will be made available on the class pages on the website.

**Care Club**

Care Club will continue to be a service opening at 7:30 each day. We have the facility to provide care until 6pm. Please contact the office for further information and see the the website for payments and details. <https://www.howard.staffs.sch.uk/our-school/care-club>

**Recovery Curriculum**

We are looking to making a full recovery and getting back to ‘normal’ and quickly and safely as possible. Please find attached, at the end of this letter, a ‘Howard Phased Recovery Plan’, which will provide you with the information about the systems we have in place and the projected time-frame.

We are also looking into providing more intervention support through the National Tutoring Project. You will be informed if you child is to receive this support.

Thank you for your continued support and here is to a year with some semblance of normality!

Best Wishes



Rachel Mills

Headteacher

|  |
| --- |
| **The Howard Phased Recovery Plan for September 2021 Onwards\****\*To be used alongside the latest government COVID guidance and school’s risk assessment. Any plans in this document are subject to change based on reviews of each phase, and any changes to COVID/H&S guidance or risk assessments. This largely covers the practical changes taking place due to changes in national guidance, rather than curriculum recovery.* |
|  | **Phase 1: September to October HT** | **Phase 2: October HT to Christmas** *(Planned but may be revised based on data available nearer the time.)* | **Phase 3: January onwards** *(Planned but may be revised based on data available nearer the time.)* |
| **Drop-off and collection** | * **AM:** Gates open from 8.30am and are locked at 8:45.
* **PM:** Gates open from 3:25pm, collection is at 3:30pm for all pupils
* Children in Class 3 are to be dropped off and collected outside the gates to ease congestion.
* **Drop off and collection points**
* Class 1: Gate at entrance to Class 1
* Class 2: Through the classroom door (black door)
* Class 3: Through the main entrance
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 | * Same as Phase 1
 |
| **One-way system** | * Parents to continue follow the one way system where possible- entry through the pedestrian gate and exit through the car park
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 |
| **Break times** | * KS1 and KS2 will have separate break and lunch times. KS1 will stay on their playground
* This ensures children have more space to utilise during their break and keeps Class 1 separate
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 | * Keep under review.
* Review whether KS1 join KS2 on the main playground
 |
| **Lunch** | * Children will no longer eat lunch in their classrooms.
* Hot dinners will continue to be available every day.
* Lunches will remain staggered KS1 and KS2, to reduce the number of children using both the hall and playgrounds at any one time.

  | * Lunchtime clubs introduced, with potentially further mixing allowed within clubs.
 | * Same as Phase 2
 |
| **Afternoon break** | * An afternoon breaks will continue to give children a short break and some fresh air in the afternoon, and allow an opportunity for the classrooms to be fully aired with windows and doors open.
* This allows windows to be open less during the cooler autumn/winter months whilst still ensuring good ventilation.
* *\*EYFS already have free-flow play outside.*
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 | * Keep under review as we head into warmer weather and rooms can be fully ventilated throughout the day.
 |
| **Bubbles/mixing classes** | * We will return to allowing children in different classes to mix, but initially this contact should be planned and recorded e.g. Eco Committee, sports leaders, School Council etc.
* Ad-hoc and informal mixing should not take place.
* Bubble system may need to return as part of contingency plan (in discussion with public health).
 | * Review Phase 1 and adjust as necessary.
* School Buddy system may start between Reception and Year 5/6
 | * Same as Phase 2.
 |
| **Good hygiene**  | * Good hygiene, including hand washing, “catch it, bin it, kill it”, coughing into an elbow, will continue to be encouraged.
* Sanitisers outside classrooms to be maintained.
* Classroom staff responsible for ensuring other hygiene materials are available in classrooms e.g. tissues, soap. These can be requested from the cleaner or Headteacher.
* Children should wash/sanitise their hands:
	+ Coming into school
	+ Before eating at break
	+ Returning to the classroom after break
	+ Before eating at lunch
	+ Returning to the classroom after lunch
	+ As they leave school
	+ At any other time when hands are unclean e.g. after sneezing.
 | * Keep under review based on latest guidance.
 | * Keep under review based on latest guidance.
 |
| **Regular LFD testing** | * Staff and families at home will continue to be encouraged to take part in twice-weekly LFD testing using home testing kits.
* This is to pick up any asymptomatic cases and shouldn’t be used where people are symptomatic (PCR tests should still be used).
* LFD testing remains voluntary.
 | * Follow latest government guidance on home testing.
 | * Follow latest government guidance on home testing.
 |
| **PE Kits** | * A PE timetable to be shared with parents/carers so they know when to send their child into school in their PE kit-This information is on class page and discussed during Meet the Teacher.
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 |
| **Interventions** | * TAs can work across several year groups and will be deployed by Headteacher to meet the needs of the children across the key stage / school.
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 |
| **School trips** | * School trips, including residential, to return.
* Each trip should be risk assessed and should additional COVID risks be identified, e.g. cases within group on trip, high risk at trip location, and these risks should be mitigated if possible, or the trip should be postponed.
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 |
| **Parent visits** | * Volunteering to resume in full, with registers of contact.
* Come and play sessions reintroduced in Early Years, with registers being taken and face coverings encouraged and supported.
* Further parent visits where distancing between parents/carers and children can be maintained will resume e.g. music performances. Face coverings encouraged and supported.
* Possibility of further parent visits with larger groups of parents/carers (where distancing between adults/children cannot necessarily be maintained) to be explored for Autumn 2 if possible e.g. Christmas Fair.
* Only parents of children who have an Achievement Award are to attend Achievement assembly. The wearing of masks is encouraged and supported.
 | * Explore possibility of further parents visits where mixing will take place should COVID rates/local restrictions allow.
* Explore opening Achievement Assembly to all parents- aligned with current guidelines.
 | * Same as Phase 2.
 |
| **Parent meetings** | * A hybrid approach to parent meetings will be taken.
* Some information meetings/workshops will be offered in person and some will take place over Goggle Meet.
* In the same way, if parents request an individual meeting with a teacher, this may take place over the phone or in-person.
 | * Gather feedback on hybrid approach and continue if positive/adapt as necessary.
* Hybrid approach to Parents’ Evening, with some appointments in-person, and some via the app.
 | * Same as Phase 2.
 |
| **Homework** | * Full guidance on weekly homework expectations will be shared with parents and carers near the start of term.
* Full expectations of homework will resume so we ask for support and encouragement with this to ensure learning taking place in school is consolidated at home.
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 | * Same as Phase 1.
 |
| **Assemblies** | * A reduced/hybrid timetable of assemblies initially to allow for a reduced capacity in the hall.
* Only parents of children who will receive an award are invited to attend Achievement assembly.
 | * Assemblies will resume for the whole school.

(in line with government guidelines)* Explore opening Achievement Assembly to all parents- aligned with current guidelines.

  | * Same as Phase 2
 |
| **Remote learning** | * Remote learning will be available for children who are not able to attend due to coronavirus restrictions.
* Children will have access to a range of online resources on day 1 of isolation, and from day 2, will have access to learning from the class teacher.
* Parents can request technology support from school, if required.
* Further information available in the Remote Learning Policy.
 | * Same as Phase 1 unless a change to guidance.
 | * Same as Phase 1 unless a change to guidance.
 |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Face coverings** | * Face coverings no longer required at drop-off/collection, but are supported and encouraged.
* Face coverings are required for use in the reception area and other communal areas, and if visiting school alongside other parents for an event or performance e.g. music performance.
* Contractors are encouraged to wear face coverings when working alongside others, or if working in communal areas.
* Where visitors are working with a smaller, consistent group of children or individuals (e.g. supply teachers, workshop providers, and reading volunteers), face coverings will not be required but will be a personal choice.
* For staff, face coverings around school will be a personal choice, but are no longer required in communal areas. Staff should wear face coverings amongst large groups of visitors where distancing cannot be maintained.
 | * Review guidance on face coverings and amend approach as necessary.
 | * Review guidance on face coverings and amend approach as necessary.
 |
| **Staffroom** | * Distancing no longer required therefore timetable no longer required.
* Used dishes and cutlery should be cleaned immediately
* Microwaves should be cleaned between uses.
 | * Same as Phase 1
 | * Same as Phase 1
 |
| **Cleaning** | * Additional cleaning of touch points around communal areas of school, including toilets, by site manager, ensuring these areas are cleaned at least twice a day.
* Staff in classrooms have access to cleaning materials to clean further if necessary (e.g. if someone sneezes over a surface).
 | * Review cleaning guidance and amend as necessary.
 | * Same as Phase 2.
 |
| **Symptoms/ Isolation** | * There has been a change to the rules on self-isolation.
* Staff, children and parents/carers should self-isolate straight away and get a PCR test (a test that is sent to the lab) as soon as possible if they have any of these 3 symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild:
	+ a high temperature
	+ a new, continuous cough
	+ a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
* They should also self-isolate straight away if:
	+ they've tested positive for COVID-19 – this means they have the virus
	+ someone you live with has symptoms or tested positive (**unless** you are not required to self-isolate – check below if this applies to you)
	+ you've been told to self-isolate following contact with someone who tested positive – find out what to do if you're told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or the NHS COVID-19 app
* If someone they live with has symptoms of COVID-19, or has tested positive for COVID-19, they will not need to self-isolate if any of the following apply:
	+ they’re fully vaccinated – this means 14 days have passed since their final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine given by the NHS
	+ they’re under 18 years, 6 months old
	+ they’re taking part or have taken part in a COVID-19 vaccine trial
	+ they’re not able to be vaccinated for medical reasons.
 | * Follow latest government guidance on isolation.
 | * Follow latest government guidance on isolation.
 |