



Horsley CoE (VA) Primary School
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Dear Parents and Carers

As we come to the end of another extraordinary term, and steer, hopefully, fully out of Lockdown, we will be endeavouring to move ever closer to something that resembles normal times in schools. Please therefore take note of the important school updates below.

Pupil Mental Well-being

It has been particularly tough time for children; I am sure you will agree. On returning to school, the mental well-being of the children has been a high priority for all staff. Well-being Fridays have been particularly helpful in supporting children manage the mixed emotions associated with the transition to school life. As we move closer to some sense of normality, we will need to ensure that we respond to the statutory requirement to teach the full National Curriculum. From the Summer Term, Fridays will therefore resume their pre-Lockdown structure and typical content. Teachers will, as always, continue to make learning fun and engaging!

Online Learning

Our online platforms have proved very useful to help keep learning moving forward during Lockdown. We are also now looking to develop our online learning programs for supporting children with their homework and reading. If your child is self-isolating, due to COVID-19 (but they are not ill), they will be directed to the website to support them with their learning. Alas, we are unable to support children with the kind of online support that was in place during the Lockdown. For further information about the online 'offer', do see the COVID section on the school website.

Days off for Tiredness

We are seeing an increased number of parents ringing up to say their child is tired and won't be in school. We all get tired. It is perfectly normal. The transition back to school life has been hard for some children and families. However, we would sooner your child come in to school and try their best rather than have a day off every day they are tired. Teachers can adapt learning, if appropriate. If a child is ill they must, however, stay at home.

Notification of your child's illness

In the interests of keeping children safe, the school has a statutory duty to follow-up every absence. If your child is ill, please leave a message on the answerphone by 9:30am. Some parents are still not updating the school on absence. This can be very time-consuming for office staff. If we are unable to get in touch to chase an unreported absence, the school is then required to undertake a home-visit. Unfortunately, this all takes time. As a small school this presents us with a real challenge. Please therefore inform us before 9:30am, at the very latest (via the telephone messaging service, not email), if your child is ill. Please continue to do so, daily, for each subsequent day of illness.

Punctuality

Research shows that children who establish good punctuality patterns are more likely to maintain good punctuality as an adult, and in the workplace. Naturally, we want to establish good punctuality early on. Some children, however, are continuing to arrive to school late. This can be very unsettling for the child. It also causes disruption for the class teacher and impacts negatively on the rest of the children in class. Please endeavour to ensure your child arrives in school on time, daily. The window is: 8:45-8:55am. I appreciate, for some families, this can be a challenge. The LA provides a number of parenting courses to support families experiencing such difficulties. If you would like information about these, please do make contact.



Graveyard

There have been a number of concerns expressed by members of the community about children playing in the graveyard and climbing on gravestones. We have, however, been working with the children to help them understand that the graveyard is a special place. We have also tried to help them to understand the fact that the school is built next to (and in places) on the graveyard and this presents its own challenges. We have revisited all of this in the context of the school value of respect. Your support in building on this piece of work will be warmly appreciated.

School Uniform

Standards in school uniform have slipped a little. But Lockdown has, of course, made it much harder for us all to purchase new clothes and our children are growing, too fast! However, from the beginning of the Summer Term, please kindly ensure your child returns to school in full school uniform (e.g. black, grey, white, British racing green socks, etc.). Please note, stripy, spotty or odd socks are not part of the school uniform. Next term, all children should come to school in stout shoes (not trainers, crocs, flip-flops or sandals). From the beginning of the Summer Term, children will also be required to bring to school their PE kit, rather than come to school dressed in PE kit attire. This should be taken home regularly to be washed.

School Dinners

From the Summer Term, hot lunches will be available for KS2 pupils, in addition to EYFS and KS1 learners. These will be served in the hall. There will be a slightly reduced menu, but it is hoped that this will be expanded as the summer term unfolds. The menu is available on the school website under the Parent Hub tab or at the link: http://www.horsley.gloucs.sch.uk/uploads/2/5/5/3/25539103/caterlink_menu_summer_term_2021_revised.pdf

Parent Pay

Please be reminded to top up your parent pay account for school meals (KS2 only) and Wraparound Care. A small number of parents are in arrears. Managing these debts has implications for school office time. There are also additional cost implications for the school. If you are, however, experiencing financial difficulties, due to COVID-19 for example, please do make contact so that we can support you as best as possible.

Summer Term Finishing Times

From the Summer Term, school pick-up will revert to pre-COVID times. School will therefore finish at 3:15pm, as opposed to 3:00pm. Clubs will therefore begin at 3:15pm. Please be reminded to adhere to social distancing at pick-ups and drop-offs and kindly wear an appropriate face covering.

Clubs Update

Information about clubs for the Summer Term will be available within the next day or two. Do keep an eye out for a text link to the clubs letter.

INSET – Monday 19th April

We will be using some of this time to evaluate the impact of COVID on learning and to help us action plan for the Summer Term and beyond, including revising the risk assessment, which will be available on the website.

Track and Trace over the Easter Holidays

The government has asked schools to be 'on hand' to process and support with track and trace throughout the entire Easter holidays. The admin@horsley.gloucs.sch.uk address will be monitored by SLT to facilitate this. Please email the school office if your child has a positive test for COVID-19 and follow the DfE guidance on isolation.

And finally...

Well done for getting through this difficult term. It has been a real challenge for families. When the time comes, I hope you get some valuable and quality rest time. I hope you have a wonderful Easter experience, whatever this means for you. We all look forward to seeing the children return in the Summer Term.

Yours faithfully


Gary Price

