



HILLINGDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Learning and Achieving Together

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Spring Term 2021/2022

Dear Parent and Carer,

I hope you and your families have managed to have a break over the festive period and are looking forward to the new year.

However, if there are any changes in family circumstances that will impact on your child/ren please do let us know so that we can support. Please make contact with Mrs Childs (Welfare) on schildts@hillingdonprimaryschool.org.uk .

Yesterday, I received communication from the Department for Education with regard to arrangements for this term. I am pleased to say that we can open as planned on Tuesday 4th January and we look forward to welcoming your child/ren back to school for the Spring term. To keep us all as safe as possible we will continue with the risk mitigations that were in place before the end of term. We had already increased risk mitigations from those in place in September 2021 due to the rise in cases, locally and nationally.

There is an expectation that all students attend school unless your child is unwell or self-isolating. It is very important that all students attend regularly, even more so due to the amount of school children have missed over the last two years.

If your child is ill please make contact with Mrs Childs (schildts@hillingdonprimaryschool.org.uk) to explain your child's absence. If your child's attendance is being formally monitored then please provide evidence of their illness as previously agreed at the attendance panel meeting with the Local Authority. If your child is displaying COVID-19 symptoms then please follow Government rules regarding their attendance in school. If in doubt please make contact with Mrs Childs.

No exceptional leave has been granted and therefore we expect all students to return from holidays unless they have to self-isolate. Ideally, we would ask parents/carers to factor this into their holiday plans to minimise absence from school. Please make contact with Mrs Childs to explain the situation.

There is also concern across hospitals and schools about staff absence due to COVID-19. So far we have been able to manage this over the Autumn term due to good fortune and COVID-19 risk mitigations. We have benefited enormously from the support of the school community for these mitigations and from a

committed staff team who are following risk mitigations at work and at home to ensure we do as much as we can to minimise staff absence. I will keep you updated on staffing during the term.

On a more positive note, we intend to trial coaching of individual students in school. This trial will be for a small number of students who would be able to give feedback on the process (not individual conversations) and whether it has made a positive impact on them. This will help us to understand whether this is a strategy that we would like to open up across the school. We are aiming to make contact with families, in the first week of term, whose child we would like to be involved in this project. You can find more information about coaching by searching for Sue Webb at Lotus Coaching.

When you enter the school grounds tomorrow you will notice some changes. Having had to look at a muddy line for a few weeks the bushes have finally arrived and look great. Our contribution to a greener environment with more to come during the school year.

We are introducing a word of the day into our school community to increase the vocabulary of our students with the support of our staff and our parents/carers. The words will be for all students from Reception to Year 6. We will look at adapting it for our Nursery students. I appreciate that some of the words may be difficult for the younger children or maybe not? The word will be discussed in class each day and will be explained at a level the children can understand.

Our ultimate aim is not only for our students to read the word but for each child to explain what it means at a level that works for them. Our aim is not that our students do it immediately but that they learn through discussion with their classmates and siblings so that at the end of the school year they have increased their vocabulary and increased their level of understanding.

If you can discuss the words with your child that would really help us. If you can become involved in a family debate about what the words mean and link them to different contexts that would really help. If you can explain when you are finding a word difficult to explain, that would really help our students to have the confidence to 'have a go' and not be worried about making mistakes as that's how they learn. It is for our students to drive it forward to open up the debate with their families and we will explain this to them so that it isn't another family chore led by parents/carers. It is an opportunity for our students and we will encourage them to take it.

The first set of words are linked to our work on COP 26 that we started in the Autumn term:

Tuesday: Carbon Footprint

Wednesday: Environment

Thursday: Greenhouse gases

Friday: Green Party

We welcome three new members of staff to the school who join our leadership team: Ms Laura Mitchell an experienced class teacher who will lead on the school's work on the creative curriculum; Ms Samantha Bolger our new Business Leader who has worked in a number of schools and brings a wealth of business experience and Mr Daniel Hancox, a welcome addition to the Inclusion Team with his considerable experience of working in special schools.

Despite the difficulties there is good news and I am grateful that we can start the new term learning in school.

Take care,



Ann Bowen-Breslin
Principal

Reminder of previous COVID-19 mitigations that have been put in place that are particularly relevant to the whole school community. These have been put in place for the benefit of the community and I appreciate your support in following them and keeping us all as safe as possible.

1. **Positive COVID-19 Tests** - Please check the recent Government guidelines on what to do if a member of your child's household tests positive. These guidelines have recently changed. If in doubt, please do not send your child/ren into school. Please ring us or preferably email us for advice if you are not able to obtain advice from Government websites.
2. We ask all parents/carers to wear masks at arrival and dismissal times. If you are genuinely exempt then we would ask you to wear a sunflower lanyard.
3. Arrival and dismissal times remain the same as last term. We continue to have an extended period for arrival and dismissal to enable families and staff to socially distance themselves.
4. Please continue to socially distance.
5. Please continue to follow the one way system. There are a very small number of parents who are exempt and have spoken with us. Please wear a sunflower lanyard if you are exempt.
6. We had begun to relax the number of parents/carers coming to the school reception with enquiries. Unfortunately we need to return to only the very essential queries being made in person. If parents/carers wish to contact the school then please make contact via the school email or an email you have been given if you are in discussion with a particular member of staff. The school telephone is also available to parents/carers however we receive a high volume of calls and often an email is quicker.
7. **Please make sure that your child is wearing extra layers over their school uniform so that we can keep the classrooms well ventilated and the children warm. The extra layers do not need to be school uniform.** We now have Government funded monitors in the classrooms monitoring the air quality.
8. I know that social distancing, mask wearing, well ventilated classrooms and regular hand washing makes a difference to the spread of COVID-19. Please continue to encourage your children to wash their hands regularly and to cough/sneeze into a tissue (they need one daily) and then dispose of it in the bins provided. Please continue to make sure that your child is tested if they have COVID-19 symptoms or you take medical advice.

Clarification about arrangements at dismissal times throughout the school year

At dismissal times, parents/carers please come into the school to collect your child rather than calling to them from outside the school gate. If you wish your child to leave the premises unaccompanied and you judge that they will be safe then please write a letter of authorisation to the school. We have seen an

increasing number of parents/carers beckoning their child from outside the school gate. Teachers/staff are not able to send children out to their parents who are standing outside as they have the rest of the class to supervise. They are not able to walk a child to the school gate or watch them cross the playground and check they are safe with their parent/carer.