

Houghton Regis

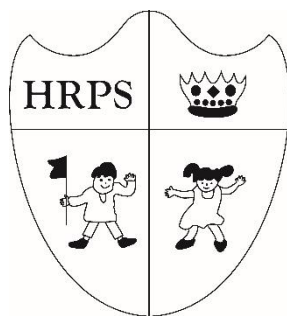
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Primary School

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3 September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Covid 19 arrangements, risk assessment and contingency planning

In line with other schools and advice from central government our school will be stepping down from our summer Covid-19 risk assessment.

However, we are still continuing with some measures to lower infection these will include:

- Assemblies will return but these will be organised into 'middle school' (Years 2, 3 and 4) and Years 5 and 6. The younger children will continue to carry out collective worship and celebration activities including the receiving of weekly certificate in their classrooms. Mrs Parmar will lead Years 5 and 6 assemblies and I will lead 'middle school' assemblies.
- During middle school assemblies pupils in Year 2 will sit at a fair distance from those in lower KS2.
- Each group will have two assemblies per week.
- The school will continue to have and use a Covid 19 isolation room.
- The school will continue with a staggered start to the day and afternoon to minimise adults meeting together unmasked. Please refrain from talking to other parents at length on the school site without wearing masks.
- Although parents are no longer expected to wear masks on site we are still strongly discouraging parents from entering the school building and using the front office. Please continue to use email and telephone communication if at all possible.
- Although formal bubbles have ceased we will continue to keep the children in phase groups as much as possible to keep everyone safe. However, the dining room will re-open in a more 'pre-covid' style and there may be some mixing between the previous bubble groups at this time.

Contingency Planning

Additionally, the school has put in place contingency planning in case there is a concentrated Covid-19 outbreak in our school community. Although the emphasis from central government is now on balancing lost learning opportunities with community health needs with a greater emphasis now on keeping school as 'normal' as possible, there may still be the need to send pupils home if there is a concentrated outbreak.



In line with the very latest advice we have received, if there are cases in particular areas of the school we may well be asking parents to collect children and keep them off school for a set period of time to protect other members of the school community. However, unlike last year this will not be whole bubbles sent home but smaller groups within these previous groups of classes.

Examples of such groups would include, members of a particular school football team within a year group, a particular friendship group of girls within one class, a group of children who attend a particular after school club activity or children in two adjacent classes who also attend gymnastics club and are in a particular friendship group.

We will continue to take advice from Public Health England and others when making such decisions and we will now very much be weighing the need for children to be in school with more weight than we have done previously.

Finally, as many of you will be aware, there is conflict currently between the government, other MPs the unions and other interested parties around the likely increase in infections rates and what should be done to mitigate risk in schools as a result. It is therefore at least highly probable that guidance may change again and at very short notice. These may include the re-introduction of previous measures to again lower infections. I will of course keep abreast of these developments and will share the school's strategy at every stage with parents and carers.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank parents and carers for their support and continuing patience with this matter.

Staffing News

I am pleased to share that Miss Katie Esson has been appointed as the new teacher for Blue Class. Miss Esson was working in our school towards the end of the last academic year and her teaching was greatly appreciated by her pupils and colleagues.

Please be aware that Mrs Helen Ingram has decided not to return to us at the start of the new academic year. Please join me in wishing her well in her future endeavours.

Log Cabin Classroom

I am pleased to share that the log cabin has now been upgraded to include heating, electricity and a large flat screen TV. It also now features a beautiful new floor. This year the log cabin will be used as an additional classroom for our Year 6 pupils.



Brand New Nursery Classroom

I am delighted to inform you that the new Platinum Nursery Classroom has been completed as planned and to schedule and will be available to the children in Platinum Class on Monday morning. Children in this Nursery Class should meet Mrs Hill through the new double fire doors. The new classroom opens out onto the current Nursery outdoor area and is directly opposite the other 'Silver' classroom. There is also a linking sliding door between the new Platinum Nursery Classroom and the existing Platinum Reception Classroom. The new classroom features its own sinks, three windows, double doors and a gorgeous 'karndeian style' wooden floor. Mrs Hill has been busy preparing the new classroom for her Nursery Class. It is hard to believe that this space was once a storage garage!



Additional Building Work in Early Years

Also over the summer we have had an additional external fire exit added to Gold Classroom. This allows the two Reception Classrooms to work independently from each other. Please bring your child to the relevant door. There are now separate doors for Reception Platinum Class, Nursery Platinum Class, Silver Nursery Class and Gold Class. The doors will be labelled with the class names on Monday morning to avoid confusion.

Children and Early Years parents should meet me, Ms Hewer and Mrs Brooke in the Early Years outdoor area on Monday morning to see which class they are allocated to if they are unsure.

Water Bottles

Please ensure pupils in all classes are sent into school with a named water bottle. The bottles should originally be filled up with water at home and children will then be able to replenish their bottles throughout the day.



Ballet

I am very pleased that a number of children from the school attended the summer ballet week with Christina Marks School of Dancing. The full programme for dance lesson will be shared with parents towards the end of next week. Miss Christina will now be working in our school for one morning and one afternoon each week to facilitate the large demand for ballet lessons.



PE

Please note all children require a full school PE kit in school at all times. These should be sent in on a Monday and only taken home at weekends and then returned again on Mondays. This will ensure all pupils have PE kits ready for scheduled and additional PE sessions. **All pupils should bring in their PE kits and leave them in school throughout the week.** It is now no longer a requirement to wash PE kits every week as a Covid-19 precaution and teachers will only send them home a few times a half term. If you would prefer to wash them every week end please simply ask your child to bring it home on a Friday evening and feel free to send them back into school for it if they forget to do this! This should avoid the need for parents to be worrying around what days the kits are and are not required. It will also ensure children do not miss out on any physical activities.

To assist with ensuring pupils continue to have PE kits available to them children attending clubs will need the following additional outfits:

Gymnastics club: Children should wear white t shirts and black shorts. This should be a separate kit to the children's standard PE kit to enable them to go home in this kit. Children competing for the school at festivals and competitions will be provided with a suitable outfit by Miss Waller that will be paid for by the school.

Football: Children should have football boots, shin pads and long football socks. Children should have either a football kit in any colour or white/green t-shirts with football socks.

Letters going out next week

Please look out for letters around the following items going out next week.

- Ballet Lessons for all groups
- Swimming for Yellow and Red Classes at Inspire Swimming Pool
- Swimming for Emerald Class at Lewsey Swimming Pool
- Football training letters – Mixed KS1, Years 3 and 4 Girls, Years 3 and 4 Boys, Years 5 and 6 Girls, Years 5 and 6 Boys
- Taekwondo Club Follow Up Letter



Letters around our gymnastics clubs and clubs offered by Premier Sport and Future Games will go out in future weeks. The football letters will also include provisional information around the festivals and tournaments we have signed up to for the different age groups and categories.

Timings for the School Day

Please note the new timings for the school day are as follows:

Morning window: 8:30 am until 8:55 am

Afternoon window: 3:00 pm until 3:15 pm.

Please note the registers will close this term at 8:55 am and pupils should be inside their classrooms at this time. I would like to take this opportunity to thank parents for making every effort to ensure all pupils are on time for school and arrive prior to classroom doors closing at 8:55.

Final Message

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all our new children and their families to the Houghton Regis Primary School Family and wish them all success and happiness at our school. The staff and I look forward to working with all our pupils again this term.

Yours sincerely

James Edwards

Mr J Edwards
Headteacher

