

11th September 2020

Dear Parents

The staff and I were delighted to welcome your children back to school this week – 96.5% of children returned to school this week, which is absolutely fantastic! We have been truly amazed at how well the children have settled back into school life. It has been lovely to see so many happy, smiling faces! Our new Nursery and Reception children have started school this week, along with a number of other children across the school, so I would like to warmly welcome all families to our school.



I would like to thank my whole staff team, who have worked so hard to prepare for reopening and have continued to work so hard this week helping the children settle in to the new normal at school.

This first week back at school, has been crammed full of lots of fun! For these first two weeks of term, we are running an Enrichment Fortnight – during these two weeks we will be re-visiting key learning from the summer term. The fortnight will also be packed full of outdoor learning, the Daily Mile and lots of activities focusing on wellbeing and getting children back to the routines of being in school and learning. Classes will also be doing Forest School activities, following our whole staff training last week – do ask your children about the fun outdoor learning that they will be regularly taking part in.

Do look at our School Blog, as class teachers will be regularly posting

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for adhering to the reopening plans – we have really appreciated your support in trying to keep our school as safe as possible, in particular by using our one-way system, arriving on time for school and collecting children on time at the end of the school day.

I am certain that there will be challenges ahead as we continue to navigate our way through the coronavirus pandemic. Please remember that if your child or anyone in your household has one of the key symptoms of coronavirus, that your whole household must stay at home while the person that has the coronavirus symptoms is tested. If the result is negative then your child can return to school.

Below I have outlined some important reminders for this half term, which I hope you will find helpful.

I hope that this academic year will be a happy and successful one for your children.

Gifts for Staff



I know that a number of families had gifts for staff that they were unable to give at the end of last term. We are still in a similar position in terms of having to limit the number of things that come from home into school. On Monday and Tuesday next week, Mrs Norwood will have a tub on the playground by the entry point into school. If you do have a gift for a member of staff, please put it in the tub; the gifts will then be quarantined and Mrs Norwood will then deliver them to staff on your behalf! Please make sure that any gifts are clearly named.

Key Diary Dates

- w/c 14th September: Off by Heart Poetry Recital week
- w/c 14th September: Week 2 of Enrichment Fortnight
- Wednesday 16th September: Braiswick in to take individual photographs of all children
- Friday 18th September: PTA AGM (via Zoom), 10am
- Friday 18th September: SEN IPPs to be sent home to parents (instead of our usual SEN Open Morning)
- Friday 2nd October: Christmas card designs to be sent home to parents, to be returned by Friday 16th October
- Friday 16th October: Flu nasal spray for children in Reception – Year 6
- Friday 23rd October: Inset Day (school closed for children)



Key Diary dates for Autumn (2) will be reviewed at October half term, taking account of the most up to date government advice regarding covid-19.

Photographs

You will see from the Diary Dates above, that Braiswick will be visiting school next week to take individual photographs of all children. The children will be photographed class by class, so class bubbles will not mix. The children will be supervised by their class teacher at all times, they will be photographed standing up and the photographer will maintain 2m distance at all times. Once we have received the proofs, we will send them home with the children. Please make sure your child wears their full school uniform to school on Wednesday. Please note that this year we are unable to organise sibling group photos due to the need to maintain class bubbles.

Reception and Year 1 - On Wednesday next week, children in Reception and Year 1, who usually come to school in their PE kit on a Wednesday, should come to school in their full school uniform, but wear trainers – their PE lesson on Wednesday will be fun games on the playground.

Class Information

At this time of year we are usually welcoming parents into school to meet with new class teachers – unfortunately this year we are unable to do this, so accompanying this Friday letter is a 'Meet the Teacher' powerpoint presentation from your child's class teacher (Years 1 – 6), which I hope you will find useful and informative.

Accompanying this letter is also your child's class Curriculum Newsletter (Nursery – Year 6), which gives you further information about the term ahead.

Absences from School



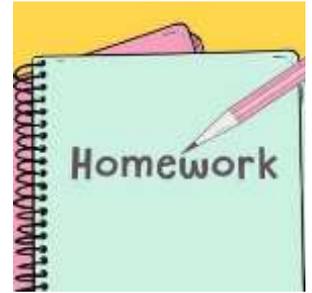
If your child is absent from school, please always inform the school office by 9am. We do ask that, if a child has been physically sick or had diarrhoea, that they be kept at home for a period of 48 hours, to prevent the spreading of infections.

The school office will contact the parents of any children who have not attended school and for whom we have not been notified of their absence, soon after 9am. Therefore, please let the office staff know of any absence before 9am to save them having to make a call.

If your child is self-isolating because they, or another member of your household has coronavirus symptoms, please inform the school office, as it is important that we are aware of any possible outbreaks.

Homework

Homework tasks have the most impact when they are specific and focused on the learning taking place in school. This year, we will continue to send children home with weekly homework tasks which will help to reinforce the learning which has already taken place in school.



Homework will commence during the week commencing 21st September – homework will be uploaded to Google Classroom for your child to access via their login. If you did not set up your child's login last term, then instructions for how to do this are accompanying this Friday letter. If you encounter any problems, please email: googleclassroom@shepherd.herts.sch.uk

Please encourage your child to complete the set homework tasks as this will help them to reinforce their learning at school and is also a great way for parents to keep in touch with the work being taught in school each week. Children can complete homework online or at home – please do not send paper copies of homework back into school, as we are limiting the number of things that come into school.

From Year 2 upwards we expect the learning of times tables to be ongoing.

We also ask that all children throughout the whole school read on a daily basis at home (or as frequently as possible). Individual reading books will have been allocated to all pupils this week by the staff teaching them, so please look out for these in book bags. As already explained, these must be returned to school on Thursday to be quarantined before being put back on the bookshelves each Monday morning.



Specific home learning tasks set for pupils in KS1 and 2 will be as follows:

Nursery

- Homework packs (sent home each Friday, to be returned to school the following Monday)

Reception

- Homework will be set on Tapestry (each week)

Years 1 & 2

- Weekly phonics/spelling home learning (sent home each Thursday to be returned to school the following Thursday)
- A weekly MyMaths online task (set each Thursday to be completed by the following Tuesday)

Years 3, 4, 5 & 6

- Weekly spelling home learning (sent home each Thursday to be returned to school the following Thursday)
- A weekly MyMaths online task (set each Thursday to be completed by the following Tuesday)
- A weekly Spag.com online task or a written English task (set each Thursday to be completed by the following Tuesday)

Year 5 & 6 Homework - To help prepare the children in Years 5 and 6 for secondary school and to ensure that they make the most of the opportunities provided to them via home learning, homework set for children in Years 5 and 6 continues to be compulsory. We very much hope that you will support your child in completing their homework each week. If your child does not complete their homework at home, they will be asked to complete it at break/lunchtime.

School Uniform & PE Kit

Thank you to all those parents who have sent their children to school in the correct, full school uniform this week – the children are looking incredibly smart! If you are unsure of any part of our school uniform policy, please look on our school website for full details.



Spare Shoes/Wellingtons Thank you to those parents who have already sent in a spare pair of shoes or wellingtons for their child to wear out on the school field at lunchtimes. This week we have been blessed with dry weather, but as it starts to rain the field will get muddy – please make sure your child has a spare pair of shoes, otherwise they will have to go out in their school shoes and they will get very muddy.

PE Kit Please continue to make sure that your child comes to school in their PE kit on the days their class does PE. As already explained, children who do not wear their PE to school will have to do PE in their school uniform.



We are a 'Nut-Free' School

A reminder that we are a nut-free school, as we have a number of children that have serious allergies to nuts. Please make sure that your child's packed lunch does not contain any nuts or items with nuts in.

Our Open Door Policy

Our Leadership Team consists of the following people:

- Headteacher: Mrs Foad
- Deputy Head & Inclusion Manager: Mrs Freuchen
- Early Years Leader: Mrs Luts
- Key Stage 1 Leader: Mr Charter
- Lower Key Stage 2 Leader: Mrs Bryson
- Upper Key Stage 2 Leader: Mr Turton

As I hope you are aware, we very much encourage an open door policy at the school. Although we cannot allow parents to actually come into school at the moment, we still very much want parents to talk to us if you have any queries or concerns – please contact your child's class teacher or Key Stage Leader via the school office (01923 773478). If your concerns still remain, then please do make an appointment to talk to me.



Parking

Please remember to avoid parking directly outside school, so that there is adequate space for social distancing as families arrive at school. Please also park considerately for our neighbours.

The staff and I very much look forward to working in partnership with you this year. We hope that your child makes good academic progress, develops their social skills and, most importantly, enjoys their time at school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Claire Foad
Headteacher