



Dear Parent/ Carer

As we reach the end of the first week of term, I wanted to write to you to say what a joy it has been to welcome our pupils back to school. Our new year 5 enjoyed a great transition day on Wednesday and have all settled in brilliantly with smiles all around the Orchard building. On Thursday, we welcomed all other year groups back to school – the excitement could be felt in every building. We have loved seeing and hearing the buzz of a busy school once again. Each year group has listened perfectly to our welcome assemblies to ensure that we can return to school in a calm and safe manner. As we anticipated, they have all adapted to the new routines with maturity and ease and we are very proud of them.

School organisation

As part of our gradual return to school life, all pupils have spent the first week with their new form tutor and class. Next week, pupils will follow their new timetable for the morning and will return to their form class for the afternoon. From Monday 14 September, everyone will follow their full school timetable. PE kit will now need to be brought to school on the required days – you should receive an electronic copy of your child's timetable shortly. Pupils are welcome to bring in their own hand sanitiser. We are also asking that they bring their own headphones if they wish to use them in computing lessons, for example.

Pupil wellbeing

It has been wonderful to see the children back together in school. They have told us how happy they are to be back in routine, in the classroom and with their friends and teachers again. Over the next few weeks, we will be focusing on mental health and wellbeing and will be providing additional support where it is needed. I can already see that even a few days back into the new term has boosted the confidence of many pupils and that most worries have now been allayed.

School transport

We have monitored the school transport this week and have been very impressed with the conduct on board. All pupils have listened to the drivers well and responded to the new expectations. Please could you continue to reinforce the importance of excellent behaviour on both school and public transport and discuss the safe removal of face coverings too.

Communication

Life is busy and we know there has been even more information than usual to digest over the past few months. We value positive, regular communication with our school community and hope that we can continue to streamline this even further to make it easier to keep up with. We intend to send

two email updates each week containing letters (on a Tuesday and Thursday) – we will sign-post which letters apply to which year group. We aim to send most letters electronically so it is important that we have up-to-date email contacts for you all – please update us with any changes. If you would prefer to receive paper copies of letters, please let us know by calling the office or emailing us at admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk. All school letters will also be added to our [‘Letters to Parents/ Carers’](#) page on the website.

Your child will now also have their ‘School Planner’. This is their own personal diary and we encourage them to use it to become more independent with their organisation and learning. This year, we will not use the planner to record behaviour messages – we want these to be positive, personal spaces for the pupils to take pride in. You can still use the planner as a way of communicating important messages to your child’s teachers. Communication is part of a good home-school relationship so please get in touch with us with any questions or concerns. Your child’s form tutor or subject teacher is your first point of contact – you can contact them by calling the office or by emailing the admin address.

Behaviour

We were so excited to launch some new additions to our behaviour policy this week. We have created a new ‘P point’ system for the pupils which will recognise the very positive behaviour of our pupils whilst contributing to their overall house score. Mrs Curry will be writing to you next week to explain the approach in more detail and to tell you about how you can stay updated with your child’s daily behaviour in school.

Upcoming events

- **Wednesday 9th September:** Year 5 Team Building Day (*please bring outdoor shoes/ trainers to school*)
- **Week commencing 28th September:** Pastoral Consultations (*telephone appointments with form tutors for all year groups*)
- **Friday 9th October:** Young Minds #HelloYellow Day (*promoting mental health and wellbeing for young people by wearing something yellow*)

We will soon be commencing our packed schedule of extra-curricular opportunities albeit in line with the safety measures in place. We are taking a few weeks to settle everyone back into routine but we will soon publish club lists to allow pupils to consider which they would like to sign up for. We encourage all pupils to get involved and take on new opportunities – there are so many of them at HMS!

Remote learning

We are currently finalising our remote learning provision and will communicate details of this within the next week. Remote learning will be utilised for any pupils who cannot attend school due to self-isolation, shielding or quarantine reasons or in the event of increased local restrictions. Pupils in years 6, 7 and 8 will be familiar with our approach and we will be demonstrating the use of our chosen platform, Google Classroom, to our year 5 pupils.

Finally, a thank you to all of you for your ongoing support throughout the past few months with home education, the transition support for our year 5 pupils and for preparing your child for the safe return to school. We are all so pleased to have everyone back in school with us and look forward to working with you all throughout the year ahead.

Yours faithfully

Mr Watters
Deputy Headteacher