

## HIGHFIELD UPDATE Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March



Our new lunchtime routines have worked really well this week. Children in Reception, Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 are now eating in socially distanced class bubbles. Years 3 and 4 will be moving back to the dining hall on Monday. The feedback from the children has been very positive. They told me like the brand new “Harry Potter” style tables. They like the extra space and time to play. They like the fact they can sit with their classmates and that there are no more queues. The lunchtime and kitchen team have been amazing ensuring all the systems are running safely and smoothly.



It has been a really happy week at Highfield with so many smiles on the faces of the children and under the face coverings of the staff and parents. Thank you parents – you have **all** sent your children back to school, which is surely a testament to how much you value their education and how much you trust our safety systems. You have also (nearly) all: remembered to wear your face coverings on the playground, follow the one-way systems and keep to the staggered times of the day. In fact, it almost feels like the lockdown never happened. The children have settled into their classrooms again brilliantly. So many teachers have said to me they feel like their children have never been away. I am sure that this is because, in a way, they haven't really been away because everyone joined in the live lessons and saw their teachers every day and were supported by you in keeping up with their school work. The teachers are very happy not to have to deal with Microsoft Teams every morning (I bet you are too!) but I did giggle on Monday when I saw one teacher had jokingly made a picture card for his class with a mute button icon printed on it!

We have received so many positive e-mails from parents over the last few weeks about our remote learning provision and our care for key worker and vulnerable children. I have created a survey which will be sent out to you all via parent mail this afternoon. At some point Ofsted will visit Highfield again and I don't want to forget to celebrate with them how well we worked together as a community during the lockdown so please find a couple of minutes to complete it. The link is also below.

<http://platform.leadershipmatters.org.uk/tools/diagnostic-tools/lm-survey/questionnaire-intro/?id=ef78347b-02d7-4d7c-bc3e-2e14cad55160>

I am also really looking forward to each stage of the lockdown hopefully being successful and resulting in more and more “normal” school activities starting to take place. Swimming, of course, starts after Easter and we are

keeping our fingers crossed (DfE guidance) for trips and residential to be able to run in the summer term. The spring chicks are booked and coming to Reception. The steel pans are booked for two days for our Year 5s in the summer so this year I definitely will be dancing on the school field! Next week, to replace our Years 3 and 4 missed spring trips, we are having two exciting workshops in the school hall. A Viking visitor for Year 4 on Tuesday and an Egyptian visitor on Wednesday for Year 3. The children will learn all about life in these historical periods and there will be some very exciting artefacts and activities for them to see and take part in. The workshops are all COVID risk assessed and safe. We will be asking for a voluntary contribution towards the cost from the Years 3 and 4 parents, this can be made on ParentMail. Please keep an eye on the school calendar on the website as more and more events and dates are added. You will also receive a summer newsletter from your year group teachers at the start of the summer term with lots of dates and class information.

Parents' evening bookings will open on March 17<sup>th</sup> and we will be using Microsoft Teams as we did in October. I think this is one system we will keep when we do eventually go back to "normal". My plan is to keep parents consultation meetings on Microsoft Teams and then have regular open mornings for parents to visit their children in classrooms to talk with them and look at all their work.

The news that makes me the happiest of all at the moment is when I hear that members of the Highfield staff team have received their first vaccinations. We are still talking about a very small percentage of the staff and so safety remains my number one concern. I hope you and your families are soon called for your vaccinations and that when you get the call for your jab you will go. I thought the Queen was so wise when she said don't just get the vaccine for yourself but do it for others too.

Please keep following the rules and guidance and help us continue to keep Highfield children, parents and staff safe.

**We can do this!**

Julie Colley