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Houghton Conquest
Lower School

Growing together

Headteacher
Miss C A McCarthy

Value of the Month: Appreciation

19th June 2020

Dear Parents and Careers

RE: Keeping in touch

As you will be aware, throughout the past three weeks we have been continuing to welcome back different pupils from across the school into our bubble groups and have even formed a new 'bubble group' this week. Our Robins and Doves groups have now also been back with us for almost three weeks and have settled incredibly well and it is starting to feel like 'normal'. We are extremely proud of all of our children for their response to the changes and continued safety measures in place.

As guidance and government announcements continue to change in the wider world on an almost daily basis, all of our plans always remain provisional and adaptable to change. One such change we have found is that many more families are being requested or needed back at work, and therefore, the number of Key Worker children in school is increasing.

We are finding that we will soon become oversubscribed for places within these groups and, as government and local authority guidelines dictate, we must prioritise children from Key Worker (*as defined by the Government*) families for provision ahead of any specific eligible year groups. As a result of this increasing demand, alongside this guidance, we may have to continuously adapt the provision we are currently offering.

Wider re-opening of school

The Government have acknowledged that for many schools, given the strict preventative measures to reduce infection, wider re-opening to more pupils may not be possible before the summer holidays.

It is with great sadness that we now also find ourselves unable to plan to increase our offer to any other year groups in the near future due to our limited classroom space, staffing and toilet facilities. We will of course continue to do everything we can to support those children still learning from home and hope you will continue to contact us should you need any further guidance or support.



Transition

We do hope to invite our year 4 children into school for a short length of time in a small socially distanced bubble to say goodbye to their teachers and peers during the last week of term. We are very sad that this will not be the end of school celebration that the children and parents were hoping for; more details will be shared about this in a separate letter in due course.

For children who are joining us in September we are currently putting together a 'getting to know us' booklet which introduces you to our staff and school setting. We are also compiling a list of frequently asked questions which we hope will answer any queries or questions you may have. Once these are completed we will share them with you. Our pre-school staff are also putting together a 'school readiness board' to help inform the children who are in pre-school.

A message for all

With these changes in mind it is important to highlight that, with current restrictions and guidance in place; we reiterate that we are almost working at our absolute full capacity. If at any time we lose a member of staff due to illness or any other personal reason we will need to close the bubble for this group until staff members are able to return.

Coronavirus updates

Please follow the link below to access information and resources to support with health and education during this time.

- https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/11/children_and_young_people/755/coronavirus%20information_for_parents_and_carers

The government have also updated the following.

- Critical workers who can access schools
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>
- Planning guide for primary schools
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools>

Home learning

Thank you so much for continuing to support your child's learning from home. Some children may be coming to the end of their home learning pack; if this is the case and you would like a new home learning pack, then please see information below about when to collect it from school..

However, if you are still continuing with the home learning pack you already have, please continue to do so and you can get in contact with your class teacher if and when you would like to access the new home learning pack. We are more than happy to facilitate what is best for you and your family, as I am aware every household has their own demands and we do not wish to add any extra pressure.

If your child/ren are **not attending school** and you would like another home learning pack they will be available to collect next week (see table below). If you would like to receive your pack **via email, please email your child's class email address to state your preference.**

The home learning packs will be labelled and on a table in the designated area for you to collect. This will run across two separate days if you are unable to get to the school on the first day.

Wednesday 24 th June		
Class	Time of Collection	Location
Robins	Between 10am and 12.00pm	Under the canopy on the right-hand side, outside the green gate, where you drop your child off.
Doves	Between 10am and 12.00pm	
Owls	Between 1:15pm and 2:30pm	
Falcons	Between 1:15pm and 2:30pm	

Thursday 25 th June		
Class	Time of Collection	Location
Robins	Between 1:15pm and 2.30pm	Under the canopy on the right-hand side, outside the green gate, where you drop your child off.
Doves	Between 1:15pm and 2.30pm	
Owls	Between 10am and 12.00pm	
Falcons	Between 10am and 12.00pm	

Please continue to adhere to the following guidance:-

- Please support us by collecting your child's home learning at the given time.
- Where possible, please limit the number of people visiting the school to collect home learning packs
- Please follow the one-way system that is clearly marked out on the path leading into school.
- If you have more than one child in the school and in different classes, you will be able to collect multiple packs at the same time. These will be still available to collect in the designated areas above.
- Please remember to continue following Government guidelines with regards to social distancing when collecting home learning packs.
- Please only collect the pack that is allocated to your child/ren.

If you have been/are currently self-isolating and/or display symptoms, please do not come to collect the home learning pack yourself. We will ensure the home learning pack gets to you as soon as we can. Further information regarding this can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>

Free School Meals

With the ever-changing situation unfolding, it is important to highlight this facility to our community once more. If your family circumstances change due to factors beyond your control and your family is now in receipt of one of the benefits listed on the web page below, then your child may now be entitled to 'Free School Meals'.

If you feel your family does need this support and you qualify, then please follow this link: https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/53/benefits/4/free_school_meals

At times of change as drastic as these, it is important to reach out for help where you can. This system is a 'safety net' for our families that ensure children can be kept healthy and families can be supported through difficult times. Accessing help when it is needed is a real sign of strength and determination to ensure the wellbeing of your family.

Please do contact us if you need any more guidance or support with this or any other related matter. If you think you meet the free school meals eligibility criteria, please call 0300 300 8306.

When you call to apply for free school meals, please have the following information ready:

- National Insurance numbers and dates of birth for you and your partner
- Dates of birth for your children
- If you receive support from the National Asylum Support Service, your NASS number

Just a reminder that we are constantly updating our website under the 'Closure' tab, as it contains some very useful information.

We thank you all for your support, kind words and continued belief that we will always ensure that the safety and best interests of our pupils, staff and families remain our priority.

Best wishes, keep safe!

Yours sincerely



Miss J Heaslip
Acting Headteacher