



Monday 31st August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you have had a good Summer break. I am quite sure that this was rather a different one to usual or the one you had planned, but I hope that whatever the circumstances for your family you managed some quality time together.

I am writing with a few final reminders before the new academic year begins for most children on Thursday.

Parent Handbooks

These have been sent to all parents and it is imperative that you have read these before your child's first day this term. A few emails in to school indicate that some parents may not have looked at these yet. There has been a great deal of planning for the school to fully re-open and it is important that parents are aware of their child's drop off and collection times and which gates to use. The Parent Handbooks also explain some key changes – significantly, that we are unable to offer a hot meal for KS2 (Years 3-6) at present and also that children must come to school in their PE kits on two days of the week – along with much more.

Social Story

Attached with this letter is a Social Story that should be shared and discussed with your child please. Parents whose children returned to school in June told us that these documents were especially helpful in discussing what school would be like with their child. Our Social Story has been updated for this new academic year in line with the plans we have made in accordance with government guidance.

Quarantine

We have already been contacted by a few parents informing us that their family are now or will be in quarantine following a visit abroad. It is imperative that we have accurate information about any non-attendance but equally important that families do adhere to quarantine for 14 days from their return home. Please do let us know if this applies to your child, confirming your child's name and new class, the destination, the date you returned home and the date your child will be returning to school. Thank you.



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What your child should bring to school – some further explanations

I thought it might be helpful to clarify the situation with bags and lunch boxes as this may not have been clear enough in the Parent Handbook. We need each KS2 child to store their lunch box in their own bag hanging on their own peg because we do not have enough storage space in corridors or enough lunch trolleys to have all those packed lunch boxes outside each classroom. Furthermore, this would result in crowding at trolleys. There is no space in the classrooms for each child's lunch box given that the tables are more spaced out than usual. One bag hanging on a peg during the school day that then goes back and forth daily means that we can ensure the corridors and walls have a good clean which is easier without PE bags, lunch trolleys etc. Children in Years 5 and 6 each have a locker (although these aren't locked!) so that's where their lunch box will be stored. So, in short, children don't need a great big bag as they will only be bringing a lunch box, water bottle and reading book back and forth.

EYFS and KS1 children should bring a book bag and if any of these children are bringing packed lunch (thus not having the Universal Free School Meal) there will be storage in the classroom or corridor for these.

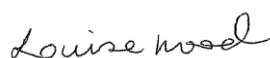
A plastic lunch box (as requested in the Parent Handbook) is more likely to get a 'proper wash' each night as oppose to a fabric lunch box which might just get a quick wipe over on the inside. No pencil cases because each child's stationery will go in a plastic wallet provided by the school and this will be left on each child's desk and be cleaned by the cleaners every day. A blanket rule on no pencil cases is easier than specifying certain types of pencil cases.

Returning to school post-closure – we are here to support

We are all extremely excited to be welcoming children back to Barrow Hedges for a new academic year. Although having 'bubbles' return to school in June made it feel "more like school," and indeed, these ran really successfully with very happy children, it just wasn't the same without full classes and we have all missed this. We are very aware that there will still be a variety of measures in place that mean Barrow Hedges won't be quite as it was 'pre-covid', but there is a definite sense of "returning to some normality." I want to assure you that, as always, everyone's health and safety is paramount. And this includes mental health and wellbeing. We are mindful that each child and parent will feel differently about what September and this school year will bring. We have therefore spent lots of time considering what the first few weeks in particular will look like. Teachers have worked hard on planning lessons/activities that support a return/start to school and also that will help us to deliver our recovery curriculum. I will write to you with further details about this once we are back. But the key message now is that we will do our very best to support your child and will work with you in doing so.

Enjoy the last few days of the holiday – fingers crossed for a return of the sunshine!

Kind regards,



Mrs Louise Wood

Headteacher