



Tuesday 3rd September 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back! I hope you have had a restful break and enjoyed time with family and friends. It has been lovely to welcome the children back in to their new classes this morning.

I write to you with various updates and important information so that we can have another successful year ahead.

Staffing

We extend congratulations to Mr Luke Buckingham and his family on the birth of another daughter. Beatrice Annie was born during the summer holidays weighing 8lbs.

There have been some changes to our Senior Leadership Team and we congratulate Miss Marianne Wilson on her promotion to Assistant Headteacher. She will be a very welcome addition to our team. In addition to supporting the school's monitoring activities and continuing to lead English, Miss Wilson will spend the next two weeks teaching Lime Class covering for Mr Buckingham who will be taking paternity leave, as from Monday 9th September. Miss Becky Cheetham will take over as Assistant Headteacher when Miss Wilson goes on maternity leave later this term.

All teachers, except those who are newly qualified, have responsibility for a subject or project and clarification on these areas of responsibility can be found on our website.

It is always important that you raise any questions or concerns initially with your child's Class Teacher and a good time to do this is at the end of the day in the playground, although please be mindful of the importance of enabling the teacher to safely dismiss their class. If you would like to arrange a meeting or phone call with your child's teacher, then this can be arranged through the school office. You may telephone or, preferably, email office@barrowhedges.com, using the teacher's name in the subject header.

There may be some occasions where you feel that you would like to speak with the Year Group Leader. These are listed below:

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Early Years – Mrs Janine Covey (teaches Fox Class)
Year 1 – Mrs Jenny Rawlinson (teaches Otter Class)
Year 2 – Mr Joe Pearce (teaches Woodpecker Class)
Year 3 – Miss Cat Davies (teaches Ash Class)
Year 4 – Mr Luke Buckingham (teaches Lime Class)
Year 5 – Miss Becky Cheetham (teaches Beech Class)
Year 6 – Miss Jessica Edwards (teaches Willow Class)

I am sure you will join me in welcoming our new teachers to Barrow Hedges - Miss Carmen Cheung (Hedgehog Class), Miss Abigail Swinfield (Woodpecker Class) and Miss Lizzie Holmes (Oak Class). Mrs Rubya Killedar, one of our Midday Assistants returns this academic year as a Teaching Assistant, working in Reception. We wish her well for this new role. A further change has been the promotion of three of our Teaching Assistants to Higher Level Teaching Assistants – congratulations to Mrs Terri Hutchison, Mrs Tianne Buttle and Mrs Lorraine Coxon who are working in this new position as from today. This is hugely beneficial for the school as all three will be able to cover classes on the occasion of staff absence. This provides continuity and consistency for the children. Naturally, for any extended periods of absence, we will continue to use agency supply teachers, and we always aim for this to be teachers who we know well.

Hedgerows

You will hopefully know from my letter at the end of last term about our new after school care, 'Hedgerows'. A number of parents have reserved places for their children for this term but there are still spaces should you wish to book. This can be done via Parent Pay. Should you have any questions or queries about this, do not hesitate to contact us.

Extra-curricular Clubs

A reminder that the deadline for booking your club into our extra-curricular activities is this Friday, 6th September at 12 noon. You will be advised of your club allocation by Thursday 12th September and clubs commence on the week of Monday 16th September.

Please be advised that children are able to attend any of our after school clubs and then go on to Hedgerows afterwards until 5pm. The adult running the after school club will take children to Hedgerows in the Infant Area.

Improvements to the school over the summer holidays

We are delighted that we have been able to add more playground markings over the summer break. This morning the children enjoyed playing snakes and ladders and hopscotch and exploring the phonics lily pads amongst other new activities. We are sure that these will continue to engage the children and keep them active at playtimes. Thanks to Mrs Kelly Wallis for organising this.

Our Infant Area has had a makeover! The large area predominantly used by Years 1 and 2 has been redecorated and a new floor laid and it really does look great. With furniture and resources having been re-organised this whole area has been revived and is now a much fresher, vibrant and purposeful learning environment. Of course, the aforementioned Hedgerows will be able to benefit from this space as well as all of our EYFS and KS1 classes.

Our School Business Manager has worked tirelessly over the summer to ensure that Barrow Hedges continues to be a safe and attractive place to learn and there are a number of other planned projects as part of the school's Improvement Plan. We are aware, for example, that the logroll fencing adjacent to the Harbury Road gate needs replacing and this is in hand. Our admin team have also worked hard to ensure that we have had a very smooth transition into this new school year. Do contact them if there is anything that you need help with.

Lost property

Unfortunately this is becoming a real issue for us with more and more items of clothing, water bottles, etc coming in to school un-named as exemplified by the mountains of belongings on the tables put out at the end of term. Two parent volunteers, Mrs Thiru and Mrs Shovelton, kindly took the lost property home and washed and sorted it all over the holidays – and a mammoth task this was. Many of you will have seen on the Barrow Hedges Buy and Sell Facebook page that this job was being undertaken. Mrs Thiru and Mrs Shovelton are now returning the items to school and the admin team are distributing those items that were found to be named to their owner – check with your child over the next few days as they may well come home with that long lost coat or missing plimsole! The next step will be to set up more regular ‘Nearly New’ sales as we also continue to receive a number of donations of second hand uniform...more on this to follow!

School Games Mark– Platinum

We are thrilled to share the great news that over the summer holidays we were awarded the Platinum School Games Mark. This is reflective of our hard work to ensure that we aim to provide the highest quality PE education.

Homework

This year we will be reviewing and updating the homework that is given to children in all year groups. We know that is always a controversial aspect of school life and we are very aware that we will never be able to please everyone! However, in order to make an informed decision on any changes, we would be extremely grateful if you could spare 5 minutes to follow the link below and complete the survey, giving your honest feedback on homework for your child. We appreciate that many of you will have already answered a question about this in the Parent Questionnaire, sent home in July, but completing this survey for us will be extremely informative.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/PVVD5JS>

It is our aim to ensure that the children at our school are given homework that is manageable, meaningful and pushes their learning forward without overloading them at home. Parents will be informed of the changes once a full analysis has been completed and homework will commence the week beginning 16th September.

If you have any further questions about this survey then please direct them to Miss Wilson who is overseeing this area of our school improvement in her capacity as Assistant Headteacher.

Parent Questionnaires

Just a reminder that we would still like to receive your feedback on the parent questionnaires that were sent home with your child’s end of year report in July. The box to return your parent questionnaire will remain at the front office until Friday 13th September. Thank you.

Parent Information Meetings

A reminder that you are invited to our Parent Information Meetings which are all held at 3.30pm in the main school hall. Children will be looked after by staff in a classroom.

Monday 9th September – Years 5 & 6

Tuesday 10th September – Years 1 & 2

Thursday 12th September – Years 3 & 4

Items for the classroom – please!

If you have not already done so, please send your child to school with the following:

- A box of tissues for their classroom. This provides a stock to keep classes going throughout the year
- A glue stick

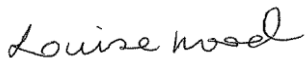
For children from year 3 onwards, please provide your child with appropriate stationery in a named pencil case: Pencil / Eraser / Ruler

Drop off arrangements

We welcomed the children back to school in a calm manner this morning thanks to support from parents waving their children off at the gates. Thank you. A reminder that we will continue to welcome the Year 1 parents on to the playground, dropping their child off to the Year 1 outside area (where there are separate gates for Rabbit, Squirrel and Otter classes) should you feel that your child needs this for transition. Obviously the aim is for parents to leave their child at the Harbury or Radcliffe gates so we will write to Year 1 parents to let you know when this will commence – we do like to ensure the children are ready for this. We are able to ensure the school site and, more importantly, the children are safe if parents do not enter the playground in the mornings. Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation with this.

On behalf of all the staff here at Barrow Hedges, we are looking forward to working with you and your child(ren). Here's to a happy and successful 2019/20.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Louise Wood
Headteacher