



**Mrs Louise Wood BA (Hons) PGCE NPQH**  
**Headteacher**

Dear Parents / Carers,

This year, our focus will be on arithmetic within our maths learning as we have identified that this is our next step as we further improve our maths provision for the children. This extends from Year 1, right through to Year 6. At the beginning of the year, teachers in Years 2 to Year 6 conducted a number fact assessment with each child in order to identify if there were any common gaps across the school. It was found that, in many year groups, children were not applying the simple mathematical strategies taught to them further down the school to help them solve basic arithmetic questions. For example: bridging and compensating (e.g.  $5 + 9 = 5 + 10 - 1$ ), number bonds to 100 (e.g.  $85 + 15$ ) and near doubles (e.g.  $4 + 5, 9 + 8$ ). We have decided that these strategies will be revisited with the children in order to best support them to develop and apply key mathematical skills that they will use throughout their lives.

These skills have always been taught in Years 1 and 2, however they will now also be taught explicitly in Key Stage 2 in order to help the children transfer them in to their long term memories and ensure that they have a bank of quick and efficient strategies to approach basic arithmetic with. We strongly believe that not only is this imperative for their time at Barrow Hedges, but it is a key life skill. As a result of these findings, we have recently introduced 'Daily Arithmetic'. Three times a week, the children will have fifteen minutes explicitly dedicated to arithmetic. During these fifteen minute sessions, a key mathematical skill will be taught and then practised for a further five sessions over the course of two weeks. The skills will begin with revisiting the aforementioned strategies and then progress on to year group specific skills. The school has been trialling this for a few weeks now and thus far, the feedback from the children and teachers alike has been very positive.

In addition to this, we are teaching the children the importance of learning their times tables. It is imperative that children become confident at the quick recall of times tables facts as this enables them to quickly and efficiently solve a wide range of other mathematical problems, including basic multiplication and division. Whilst we spend time on practising these skills at school, it is vital that the children continue practising at home so the facts become embedded in their long-term memory. It is for this reason that we ask you to continue practising these facts with the children at home in order to help support their learning.

Thank you for your continued support.

**Miss Jessica Edwards**

Year 6 Year Group Leader



**Harbury Road Carshalton Surrey SM5 4LA**

Telephone 020 8643 4428

[office@barrowhedges.com](mailto:office@barrowhedges.com)



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