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September 14th, 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

More than a week has now passed since the return to school, and we can take stock of what has been achieved and look forward a little. All in all, the return has gone better even than we had hoped, with the children happy to be back and keen to learn and see their friends again. They deserve a lot of credit for adjusting so quickly after such an extended absence from school, which is also a credit to their families, of course.

Covid-19 Measures

As regards Covid-19 precautions in place, thorough planning has ensured that the pupil year group bubbles are kept apart, and I would like to thank all parents/carers for their flexibility in adapting to the **staggered start and end to the school day**. We recognise that this poses some difficulties, especially for parents with more than one child and times at opposite ends of the stagger period. The current arrangements have been reviewed, but with the national implementation of tighter regulations as of Monday (e.g. *Rule of Six*) we do not feel this is the right time to reduce the gap between start/finish slots (and therefore increase the numbers on-site). Parents/carers will be consulted before any changes are made to the current timings, since a change that may benefit one family may disadvantage another.

Notwithstanding the reduction in people on-site at any one time, to further minimise the risk can I request again that everyone **keeps to the left on the paths** in and out of school, and **keep your children close by**, even (especially) if they are riding a scooter (and particularly if too young to fully appreciate the 2m distancing that is required from adults).

We have expended considerable time and money to enable a hot meal to be eaten in the hall, maintaining the **communal lunchtime experience**. Dividing panels, new seating layouts, an enclosed queue (*The Secret Passage*), perspex screening in the servery, the use of the S4YC room as a mustering area and a completely revised staffing plan have allowed this to happen, alongside the extremely hard work of the catering team, the midday assistants and the caretaker Mr McCleary (who changes the table layout from the S4YC 'bubble bay' plan to the lunchtime arrangement, and back again, every day). Since the younger children always take a while to become accustomed to the school dinner routine at the start of the year, the timing issues experienced in the first few days were anticipated, and the timetable has been refined such that, while the lunch period itself now lasts from 11:40 to 13:50, all the classes are now experiencing a staggered lunchtime of a standard length (although that of the junior classes has been extended by 15 minutes to one hour (as the infants already had), meaning that junior afternoon break has temporarily been dispensed with to make up the teaching time).

Following an internal consultation, staff are wearing facial coverings in all communal areas of the school, but not in classrooms when working with the children, since teaching would be difficult. Staff working across multiple bubbles indoors (e.g. PPA staff, some TAs) are wearing facial visors, and the staffroom is out of use (all meetings are via *Zoom*). These measures will further reduce the possibility of virus transmission.

Thank you to everyone for following the national guidance as to **when children should be kept off school** (i.e. when they are showing [Covid-19 symptoms](#)). The judgements are difficult (e.g. the definition of a *continuous* cough), but we are erring on the side of caution in school when making judgements about whether a child needs to be isolated and sent home, while taking into account pre-existing conditions. If in doubt, consult the [Stay at Home](#) guidance, which also contains information on how to access a test. Please can we respectfully ask that all parents/carers observe the 2m distance markings at the classroom doors.



Remote Learning

The staff received external training (via *Zoom*, of course) last week in the use of *Google* applications and *Google Classroom*, with the system having been set up over the summer break with the aid of a DfE grant. While we do not anticipate a full lockdown again, this system will be in place to provide home learning if a complete year group bubble has to isolate, and the teachers will be exploring the interactivity of the various apps within the classroom and for homework over the coming weeks. With a fair wind, passwords will be distributed by the weekend.



School Website



www.huntington.cheshire.sch.uk

Our new website, provided by *School Spider*, now contains extensive class pages for each year group, with autumn term newsletters and curriculum information available as downloads at the bottom of the page (*Files to Download* section). Many of the class pages also link to sub-pages (e.g. *Phonics*, *Topic*) – these are reached via blue buttons near the top left of the page. We hope the clean new design appeals, and will be exploring the interactive features of the site (including an app to download) with you over the coming weeks. Parent and pupil passwords will be distributed after we have *Google Classroom* up and running, to avoid confusion.

Communication

With the move to electronic communication hastened by the pandemic (as with many changes in national life), we are now preferring all contact to be via email or telephone if possible. Notification to you of any 'head bumps' will come by text, not a paper slip or wristband, at this time.

Class email addresses should be used for all non-urgent communication with Year 1-6 class teachers (example address: alder@huntington.cheshire.sch.uk). A response will come within 36 hours during the working week - all more pressing messages should go to the school office by phone or email (**please include your child's full name and class in messages to the office**).

EYFS parents/carers should use their **Tapestry** accounts to contact staff, with the same response time.

Twitter is a great way to keep up-to-date with activities across the school – set up your own Twitter account (you don't ever need to post anything yourself) and follow us at [@HuntingtonCPS](https://twitter.com/HuntingtonCPS) to receive notifications. Our latest Tweets are also embedded at the bottom of all our website pages.

Google Forms are being used to canvass interest in after-school clubs and secure permissions for various activities: links are sent via text message.

After-school Clubs

Sports clubs for Y1, 2, 5 and 6 commence this week, with those for Y3 and 4 likely to begin next week. All clubs will follow the single year group bubble principle, and numbers will be limited (where a year group club is oversubscribed, the club will run for individual classes in successive terms). We are considering options for other clubs to run within the school building, but safety measures mean that the choir and musical theatre clubs will not be possible in the short term, and *Mad Science* will run as a virtual lesson.

Music Tuition

With suitable safety measures in place, individual music tuition has commenced this week – *Music for Life* will contact individual parents to confirm their start dates. The Year 4 instrumental programme will commence on September 21st, with guitar lessons.

We are delighted to be back working with all the children, and look forward to a year during which we will strive to provide a school experience as close to normal as possible for them.

Kind regards

Mr Rose, Headteacher