



**Heather Avenue  
Infant School**

Heather Avenue Infant School  
Hellesdon  
Norwich  
Norfolk  
NR6 6LT

Headteacher: Stacey Coleman MA NPQH  
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Wednesday 15th July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

As you will know, schools have been working very differently for the past months in light of the Coronavirus pandemic; this has altered the transition we would normally have for our new Reception children. As a result, we are incredibly aware that the start of the new term will need to include a longer transition period to support the children in making a positive start to school.

The Reception teachers have sent you a letter detailing the staggered transition that we will be offering and will have been in touch with you personally. We also hope that the information on our school website will support you in talking to your child about their start to school. Thank you for all the positive conversations that have taken place – we cannot wait to meet you and your children in person, come September!

In addition to transition, we are also thinking about the way in which school will look in September as we have had to put measures in place to ensure the safety of all children. As a school and as part of The Wensum Trust we have completed a risk assessment following the Local Authority and 'Department for Education' guidance. The guidance is robust and supports us in carefully risk assessing all possible scenarios that could occur in school.

We know some of you may still have reservations around children returning to school but we would like to try to alleviate some of your concerns with news of the measures that have been in place, and will continue to be in place, ready for a whole school return.

The information shared below outlines some of the items that we would like to share with you, in the hope that it gives you a better idea of how school will operate in September.

### **Attendance**

In March when the Covid-19 outbreak was increasing, the government made clear that no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school.

The guidance now states that *'Now the circumstances have changed and it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development.'*

The guidance goes on to state *'School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:*

- *parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;*
- *schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence;*



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- *the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct'*

Of course, this is only a requirement once your child is of "compulsory school age" (*Your child must start full-time education once they reach compulsory school age. This is on 31 December, 31 March or 31 August following their fifth birthday - whichever comes first. If your child's fifth birthday is on one of those dates then they reach compulsory school age on that date*)

### **Groupings for children**

The children will return in their new class groups with their new class teachers and teaching assistants. Groups are kept under 30 and we will maintain these groupings for all activities throughout the school day, including playtime where each class has its own zoned play area for break and lunch.

### **Safety Measures**

Social distancing will be taught but the guidance recognises that our young children will find this challenging, we will encourage social distancing in a positive manner, but our focus will be on thorough hand washing and the importance of 'catch it, bin it, kill it' for any coughs or sneezes.

We are constantly vigilant when it comes to any illness especially with regard to symptoms of Covid-19 and any member of our school community displaying any of these symptoms will be asked to stay away from school until tested or clear of any isolation periods.

Symptoms include

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If a child shows symptoms, you will be asked to come and collect your child from school immediately. We have very strict guidance on how we deal with this in school, but please be rest assured that we will always follow these rules in a caring, child friendly manner.

Children will have their own desk space and resources where appropriate. In cases where resources are shared, we ensure that they are kept within that class group only. Areas of high use will be sanitised regularly such as desks, door handles and other touch points.

### **Curriculum**

All children will receive a daily *Read, Write Inc.* lesson, a maths lesson and lots of art/craft-based activity based around carefully selected, enjoyable stories, linking to our class topics and broader areas of learning. We will support the children in building their emotional well-being through our PATHS programme of lessons. More information about PATHS will be shared with you in September.



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All areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage will be taught via themes with an understanding that there may be gaps for us to fill in your child's learning following the closure of Early Years settings.

### **Lunchtime**

When children come to school, they will be provided with a school packed lunch. Unfortunately, we are not currently able to offer the usual choices, including hot meals that we have been able to in the past. You can provide your child with a packed lunch from home if you would prefer. Children will eat their lunches in their classrooms with their class' Midday supervisor. Dietary requirements will be catered for within the school packed lunches. Please speak to the School Office if you require more information about this.

### **Behaviour**

Please see our website for our [behaviour policy](#). We feel that our usual focus on positive reinforcement and the positive relationships built amongst children and staff are intrinsic in supporting the excellent behaviour we see in school. Our focus on our 'Golden Rules' and restorative practices will support the children in making helpful and considerate behaviour choices. Class staff will work with the Reception children during their transition period to understand our Golden Rules and how they can make choices that follow these.

### **Cleaning**

We will ensure that good cleaning measures are in place; desk areas will be disinfected following each session along with any items that could become contaminated. In addition, our cleaners are completing deep cleaning work across the school site at the end of each day.

Children will be asked to wash their hands as they come into school and when they leave as well as when they move between areas in school. We will encourage good hygiene routines including the teaching of 'Catch it, bin it, kill it' for any coughs and sneezes and encourage children not to touch their mouth/nose/eyes. We will teach some of these concepts via games/songs/rhymes, which we know the children will enjoy. There will be a plentiful supply of tissues and covered bins in each classroom.

### **Coming into school**

In order to minimise the number of people who come into school, we must ensure that only essential staff and visitors will be allowed into school.

We ask that you further support us in keeping the number of people in school low, by following these points:

- Only one parent/carer should bring your child to school and pick up from school.
- There should be no groups gathering at entrance gates/doors - please maintain social distance in all areas of school.
- Please only come into the setting for essential reasons e.g. to collect your child if they are ill or for safeguarding reasons.
- Only one parent/carer should be allowed to visit the setting in these circumstances.
- Clinically vulnerable groups are discouraged from dropping off and picking up children.



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### **Travelling to and from school**

We will have 'staggered' start and finish times to the school day. You will have received further information of your child's start and finish time. We have also been advised to offer further advice around travel to and from school. This includes the following;

- Pupils and parents are encouraged to walk, cycle or drive to school rather than taking public transport.
- If using public transport, pupils, parents and staff are advised to follow the government's advice to wear face coverings when travelling on public transport. This is mandatory for children 11 years+. Please note face covering are not advised for children under the age of three years for safety reasons.
- If using public transport it is advised to wash hands before and after using the service.
- Parents are advised that it is preferable that children should bike/walk/scoot to the setting if possible.
- Pupils and parents are encouraged to travel to school safely.
- On arrival, parents and pupils are advised not to gather in parking areas, school timings have been staggered to support this.

### **Please ask...**

We have attached/enclosed a summary of the main points mentioned above, however we understand that there is a lot of information for you to take in and we are here to help – please do get in touch if you have any questions, either via phone on 01603 426438 or by email: [head@heatheravenue.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:head@heatheravenue.norfolk.sch.uk)

We will be monitoring the guidance provided to schools by the DfE and Local Authority, alongside information provided by the Wensum Trust. If anything changes, we will inform you as soon as possible. As always, we will do all we can to deliver a positive and safe experience for your children and their start to school life with us.

Kind regards

Stacey Coleman  
Headteacher