



NEWSLETTER – Friday 24th September 2021

Dear parent or carer,

We continue to cautiously return to a more normal school setting. All pupils are now eating their lunches back in the dining hall (your support here in helping your children use their cutlery correctly would be very welcome), we have widened the outdoor bubbles at playtime and lunchtime and we have returned to some face-to-face assemblies, two year-groups at a time, which have been lovely to deliver. I sent out some information from the local authority yesterday on the Government strategy on how schools now deal with COVID cases which I hope you found useful.

We are tentatively moving back to offering some out of school clubs, but still are keen to keep the numbers of visitors in school to a minimum to reduce risks. A Spanish club is being offered to Y2 children and soon, a Mandarin club will be offered to Y3. As yet, there is no news on competitive inter-school sport recommencing however plans are being drawn up for later in the year and we are looking into whether residential visits might go ahead for Y5 and Y6.

Uniform Policy - Earrings

Following a couple of queries recently (including a query around retainers), the Governing Body reviewed the school's no earring policy this week. The original decision to become a no earring school was based on health and safety advice, due to the risk of a tearing injury, particularly but not exclusively in PE lessons. There were other reasons as well, staff were very keen to reduce the amount of time being lost to PE lessons by the removal of earrings and also there was a concern that one or two pupils were using the inability to remove their earring as an excuse to sit out of certain aspects of PE.

The Governors received Health and Safety advice from the LA and other Health and Safety experts and the wearing of a retainer still poses a risk of a tearing injury and as it is flat to the ear, there is also a risk of the retainer being pulled through the ear. The Governors agreed that the policy remains we are a no-earring school and this is inclusive of retainers. We advise that ears are not pierced across the school term and we will talk to parents individually in the event of a child being unable to remove earrings for a short period of time around the risk assessment arrangements we will need to put in place for PE, outdoor play, swimming, etc. I will update the uniform policy in the coming weeks to reflect this.

Governor Update

The Full Governing Body met on Tuesday for their first meeting of the year. The first meeting is always a more procedural meeting. Mr Steve Hallowell continues to Chair our Governing Body, the second of his two-year term of office.

The Governors are currently formalising their priorities for the year. One priority is to try to increase their visibility and accessibility for parents. We are hopeful that we can have some of our Parent Governors available on the yard on occasion either to seek parental opinions or for parents to speak to directly about any issues or ideas they might have. We hope to do this at least once a half-term and we will give you more information ahead of the first date. For your information, the Parent Governors, who are elected to represent all parents currently are:

Mrs Raja Belghiti (who is also the Vice Chair) – child in Y4; Mr Stephen Dagg – children in Nursery and Y4; Mrs Jaclyn Kirkby – children in Y2 and Y4; Mrs Morag Swan – child in Y4 and Mrs Lynsey Parker – child in Y1.

Messages can be sent to the Governors either through the enquiries@hsps.org.uk address or Governors@hsps.org.uk

Holystone Primary School Parent Teachers Association

A message from the PTA:

"We are holding the Annual General Meeting of the Holystone Primary School PTA at the Cookhouse and Pub in Holystone on Thursday 7th October at 7pm."

I know we are looking at how we can restart the PTA's fundraising efforts following the recent disruption and I know they would really welcome any new members who I know will be made very welcome.

Autumn Term Parent Consultations

We will be sending out invites in the next couple of weeks for parents to sign up to a School Cloud virtual parent meeting to discuss how your child has settled in to the new term. These meetings will take place in week commencing 18th October. Many of you used School Cloud last year and the system can be use on any internet enabled device and this allows you face to face contact with your child's teacher without needing to be in school. Please look out for more information soon. We will talk to individual parents or carers if they have issues using a virtual platform.

School Meals

Now that the children are getting used to being back in the dining hall, we will look to move away from the interim menu after half-term and introduce the new wider menu from Catering Services. For children in YR, Y1 & Y2 we will send out a Google form to record your child's choices. For parents or carers of children in other year groups, we will send you a copy of the menu for you to discuss with your child. Choices will be recorded in school each morning prior to service.

Holiday requests

We are starting to see an increase in holiday requests as restrictions on travel lift and I therefore need to remind all parents and carers that the law does not allow me to authorise time holiday absence. **Any holiday taken in term time is therefore classed as an unauthorised absence.** There is very limited flexibility for me to authorise absences during term time.

And Finally...Thank you

For many years the school has worked with the Badminton coach Stephen Sharp. Very kindly, Stephen has donated a huge amount of badminton equipment to school for which we are very grateful

Yours sincerely



Stephen Baines
Headteacher