



06/09/2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, I wanted to take a moment to thank you all for making me feel so welcome during my first few days at the school. It has been a pleasure getting to know the staff, children and the local community, and I am truly grateful for the warm reception I've received.

I've really enjoyed my time here so far and am excited to continue learning and growing with the school. There's certainly a lot of new information, faces, and names to take in, but I'm looking forward to getting to know everyone better in the days and weeks ahead.

I am sure that yesterday like us, many schools up and down the country took some time to remind the children of the expectations that the school has of them, explaining how these 'rules' help children and adults to work and play together in a safe and happy way. At The Heights we used our assembly time yesterday as an opportunity to welcome everyone back, celebrate being together again, acknowledge the butterflies and nerves that some children (and staff) may be experiencing and also remind the children of our expectations, which I will summarise at the end of this letter. Please be reassured that this was a gentle reminder. These expectations are not new to the children, nor do staff take a 'one size fits all' approach towards enforcing them. Staff at The Heights know the children incredibly well and are passionate about ensuring that their approach is carefully tailored and adapted to fit each child's individual needs. During our staff training on Tuesday, staff discussed the children that may not be able to conform to some of our expectations due to medical and/or SEND needs. We agreed that any adaptation needs to be clearly documented on paperwork relating to the child so that they are not mistakenly challenged for example, being asked to remove gloves indoors when the gloves are needed to provide sensory input.

On reflection, my oversight in assembly was not reassuring children that if they find some of the expectations difficult or they are unable to do them due to any SEND and/or medical need, they will not be told off or be in trouble. I recognise that in my excitement to unite us all as a school community and drive high standards of conduct, I may have unintentionally caused some upset or worry for a small number of children and parents, and for that I apologise.

I appreciate that the transition of a new Headteacher can be an unsettling and anxious time for some members of the school community. Please be reassured that my aim during the next few weeks is to watch, listen and learn about what makes The Heights a happy, inclusive and safe place to be, as well as identifying areas for future improvement to make sure that every aspect of our school is the very best that it can be.

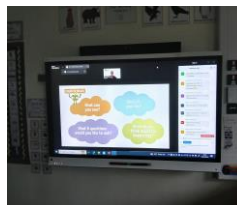
For absolute clarity and understanding of how we do it here (adapted for some children with specific SEND/Medical needs), please be reminded that:

- Children should bring a named water bottle to school and drink plenty of water throughout the day to keep hydrated ('Air Up' flavoured pods should not be used)
- Children should tie their hair up if it can touch their shoulders. Sparkly hairbands, animal ear hairbands and jewellery should not be worn
- Children should sit on their chair without slumping over and/or with their knees/feet up. Children must not rock or swing on their chair

- When the bell rings at break or lunch, children momentarily stop, put their hand in the air, listen to the adult's instruction and line up or resume play

As we race towards the weekend, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff and children for returning to school full of enthusiasm, excitement and readiness for the term ahead. As you can see from some of the photographs below, our school family have got stuck in straight away and have thoroughly enjoyed being together again.

Photos from the largest on-line assembly ever. Each class joined this morning and they are predicting half a million children in attendance!



Year 5 - Below are some photos of our art project for the first two days back. The children have been learning about illuminated letters in manuscripts from the Anglo-Saxon period. They analysed these and then designed their own illuminated letters. They will be displaying their final art pieces in the classroom and corridor.



Lastly, there are a few things to look out for over the coming week:

- The Heights internal clubs – There are still spaces! If your child would like to join please complete the expression of interest form <https://forms.gle/g833hE75rnLHz4259>
NB we may not be able to run a club if there are not enough children to participate. We will of course keep you informed of this in the event that we have to cancel the club.
- A new look weekly newsletter launching next Friday
- The Heights on Instagram. Follow us @TheHeightsPrimary

Wishing you a happy and relaxing weekend,

Mrs Harrison
Headteacher