



Highfield Middle School

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Headteacher: Richard Oades

Friday 17th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

We are already at the end of our 2nd week of term and things have started very positively. Pupils and staff alike have thoroughly enjoyed things being a little more 'normal' in school and we have been able to hold year group assemblies, safely welcome visitors and get stuck into practical lessons such as cooking and Science, all of which were restricted last year.

Our new Highfielders in Year 5 have settled in brilliantly and have embraced every opportunity we have given them so far. We are lucky to be working with them for the next 4 years and excited about everything we know they will achieve. We also welcome a new teacher to Highfield, Miss Carruthers will lead our Science department and is already a valued member of the Year 8 team. Pupils in all year groups have really shown a super attitude towards their learning so far and are treating each other with respect and kindness. 'Attitude to Learning' is a real focus for us at Highfield this year as we support our pupils to reach their full potential.

We have launched our new '**Highfield Points**' system in school, where pupils can earn points under the following categories: Respect; Effort; Achievement; Contribution; Ready. The pupils have really engaged with the system and are already well on their way to their first rewards. Pupils will be able to choose rewards as they accumulate points throughout the year, when they reach certain milestones. We will be working with our School Council next week to make sure we offer the right rewards, which really motivate our young people and give them something to aim for.

All eligible pupils in Year 7 and 8 took 2 **Lateral Flow Tests** in the first few days of term and were very mature and sensible throughout the process. Almost 400 tests were administered in school and all came back negative – which is fantastic news! There have however, been a very small number of cases within our families this week and it is vital that we all remain careful to prevent unnecessary spread of Covid-19. Contract tracing is now led by NHS Track and Trace rather than the school and identified contacts will be notified directly by them.

From this Sunday, we request that all pupils in **Year 7 and 8 resume home testing** with Lateral Flow Tests. Test kits have been distributed to appropriate pupils and we will send parentmail reminders and a link to record your result every Sunday and Wednesday. We really appreciate your support in this matter.

Under-18's and double vaccinated adults no longer need to isolate as a close contact, but are advised to get a PCR test as soon as possible. **If someone tests positive OR if they show symptoms of Covid-19, then isolation rules are still in place. Please do not send your child to school if they have symptoms of Covid-19.**

We have been delighted to see so many pupils dressed smartly each morning in full **school uniform**, ready to learn. Unfortunately a small minority of pupils have not been in full uniform at the start of term. Pupils wearing trainers (on non-PE days) and earrings in particular are not permitted. Next week children not wearing correct uniform will receive a letter with further information. Clear guidance on uniform expectations was shared before the summer break and can be found on our school [website](#). If you require support to provide your child with correct uniform, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

We would also request that pupils with long hair should have it tied back now that we are fully engaging again with practical subjects. **Hair must be tied back** for PE, Games, Science, Art and Tech. Pupils may bring a simple bobble to use at appropriate times, but for many it will be simpler to wear long hair tied back at all times.

We will be reintroducing lots of **extra-curricular clubs** next week – further information will be shared on Monday. We have a long tradition of excellent extra-curricular provision, which offers brilliant choice to our pupils and we have missed being able to provide these opportunities. We were delighted that over 150 pupils put themselves forward this week for our forthcoming Christmas production – Elf!

We have been really impressed with how healthy our children's **packed lunches** have been at the start of term, thank you for supporting our status as a healthy school. Please can we request that nuts are not brought into school as we have some pupils with severe nut allergies.

The government are rolling out a national **flu vaccination** programme for all school aged pupils and you will receive a request for consent in the coming days. All eligible pupils will be given a nasal flu vaccine (not an injection) in approximately 3 weeks' time – more detail to follow. As I'm sure you appreciate, limiting flu this winter will help the NHS to stay in control of Covid-19.

A few other dates for your diary (more info to follow):

Thurs 23 rd September -	School photographer in school
Tuesday 5 th October -	Parents evenings for all year groups
Friday 8 th October -	Hello Yellow! - wear yellow to mark World Mental Health Day

Well done to everyone on such a brilliant start to the academic year.

Have a great weekend!



Richard Oades
Headteacher