



Head of School: Miss Sunita Chauhan
Executive Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Underwood



7th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back!

I hope you have had a good summer break and are looking forward to returning to school routines again. We are excited to bring all children back into school, having spent considerable time preparing classrooms, working through risk assessments in line with Government guidance. For those children who have not been in school during the lockdown period, the school environment may look and feel a little different. Please check your class blogs on the school websites to have a preview.

Safety

Our risk assessments have been checked by the DMAT health and safety lead, Joe Wood as well as teachers' unions during the summer holidays. Please refer to the school website in order to see your school's document.

I am confident that the procedures that we have in place will enable all of our children to return safely into school as from Tuesday 8th September. We have installed wall-mounted sanitisers at each classroom door, in every learning space and floor mounted units at the main entrance to the schools' buildings. Frequent handwashing and twice daily cleaning of key areas is now the norm in our routines. Staggered arrival and departure times, as well as separate play spaces for each class bubble will ensure that we can maintain the required social distancing. Please help us by arriving promptly at designated times and also maintaining a 2m distance from other families when bringing or collecting your child from school.

We are pleased to be re-opening our libraries with the added precaution of hand sanitising prior to entry and a set return day for books on Mondays. This will enable us to quarantine returned books for a period of 72 hours before replacing books on shelves.

Lunches

We will be offering packed lunches in the first instance, for all children which will be eaten in the classroom. This enables children to remain in their class bubbles at the moment, but we are keen to keep reviewing guidance and hope to work towards offering hot meals as we assess how the social distancing situation progresses over the coming weeks. We understand that many parents prefer their child to have a hot meal and in preference may choose to provide their own packed lunch to begin with. We would be grateful if you would make your weekly choices clear through the School Gateway so that we can prepare accordingly.

Marie Bunclark, our catering manager at Chagford will now be managing the food provision at our other two schools as well, North and South Tawton – a change from last year, when they worked under the guidance of Chartwells. This recent change is being worked through carefully and we wish Marie well with this new responsibility! We will continue to support and review systems regularly to ensure that we are providing children with as healthy and tasty food as possible.

Keeping active

PE and Games will resume, but with hand hygiene and equipment cleaning measures implemented. We look forward to having a specialist sports coach working with our 3 schools, working alongside our staff, upskilling them in the process. We will be working hard to ensure that children are kept physically active on a daily basis, either with a 'daily dash', skipping, circuits etc.

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Health and Well-being

A healthy mind is just as important as a healthy body, and we will be working with the children to draw them back into school routines and learning within and beyond the classroom. We will be assessing academic needs, alongside social and emotional needs so that we can tailor our plans accordingly to meet the needs of every child. As we progress into the autumn term, we will engage with parents to communicate how your child is developing and settling back into school life.

Three Hares Curriculum

Staff of our Three Hares primary schools have enjoyed a well-deserved rest over the holidays but have been working hard to plan for the curriculum; I am delighted to say that we were able to find some time within the lockdown period to review, adapt and plan our Three Hares learning journey, using the expertise, knowledge and experience of subject leaders across our 3 schools.

School Websites

The curriculum will shortly be available for you to look at on each of our new school websites – also redesigned and launched during the lockdown! Staff will be providing a brief overview each week on their class blogs, so you can keep up to date with what is happening in school. These are also linked to the school newsletter for ease. Keep checking back as we continue to update our websites.

Uniform

We are keen for all children to enjoy their return to school and establish routines which are as normal as possible. Please help us by ensuring that your child arrives looking clean and smart in their school uniform. As we have re-worked our school logos during the past 6 months, we will be reviewing our school uniform with a view to incorporating the new logos as a matter of course, from next academic year. School skirts and trousers are expected to be grey school uniform standard, polo shirts, jumper/cardigan, and sensible black school shoes please.

Fundraising for our schools

We are always ambitious to continue to develop and enhance the educational offer at our schools and we have exciting aspirations to introduce new opportunities, improve the school environment and learning spaces. We would like to engage with parents, business and our communities in order to make progress with these plans. More news to follow soon.

At North Tawton....

As parents of Oak (Reception) Class are aware, we have said a sad farewell to Mrs Helen Martin. Mrs Martin was offered a brand new opportunity to teach in a prep school in Exeter, where she is able to focus purely on her teaching. We are pleased to have been able to support her in taking up this new role as from 1st September, due to the wonderful support of other staff. I am sure you will join me in thanking Helen for her dedicated service to the school over the past 12 years, both as a class teacher and more recently as a Special Educational Needs Coordinator. We wish her continued happiness in her new position and know we will keep well in touch.

Mrs Jessica Nuthall will be stepping into the full-time role of Reception Classteacher, having previously worked part-time with these children, alongside Mrs Martin. She is excited to take on this position and has been working hard to prepare and personalise the learning space, resources and coordinate the learning with the Foundation Stage.

Mrs Nuthall used to work 2 days a week with Beech Class, alongside Miss Boyce, who I am delighted to say will extend her teaching time temporarily, until a suitable part-time teacher can be recruited.

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Miss Chloe Bennett will be our new SENDCO. Miss Bennett is also SENDCO at South Tawton, (where she is also a teacher) and Chagford CE Primary Schools. I know she is keen to spend time at the school during these early weeks to get to know the children and parents. At the moment, she has one day a week allocated to North Tawton for undertaking her role. I hope you will join me in offering Miss Bennett a really warm welcome to the school.

You will notice that we have new fencing and gates which have recently been installed along the front of the school. This is long-awaited and we are delighted that it is finally in place. The gates are mag-locked, released by a unique fob, held by all members of staff and also in the event of a fire alarm. This new feature will help to make sure that all children are safe and secure within the school site, as well as enhancing the frontage to the school.

We have taken delivery of our new Read Write Inc phonics resources and staff will be engaging in training beginning shortly. KS1 parents will also be invited to a training session during the term enabling you to support your child at home and understand how this highly successful scheme works.

We look forward to the specialist sports coaching taking place on **Thursday mornings and all day Friday** at North Tawton. So please ensure that clean PE kit is always available on this day, in addition to each class timetabled PE session, which you will be informed about soon.

Miss Chauhan will be teaching 2 days a week and our Three Hares Heads meeting takes place on Thursday afternoons. Please be understanding of this in terms of her availability to communicate with parents during the school day.

We look forward to welcoming you back on Tuesday!

With my very best wishes for a happy and successful term ahead,

Mrs Elizabeth Underwood
Executive Headteacher