



St John's Highbury Vale C of E Primary School

Conewood Street, London N5 1DL

Tel: 020 7226 4906

E-mail: admin@stjhv.islington.sch.uk

Head of School: Mrs Lindsey Hodgson

Executive Head: Mrs Tonnie Read

Friday 11th February 2022

Dear Parents & Carers,

Another half term over, and we are approaching another school holiday with extremely high numbers of covid cases within the school. This is the third time since last summer that I know some of your holiday plans have been scamped, and I am so truly sorry. I am waiting, as ever, to receive some official guidelines as to what the expectations are for schools after the proposed changes come into place on 21st February. I will update you further as I know more.

I would however like to take this opportunity to invite all parents, carers and family members back onto the school playground at drop off and collection times after the half term. With this, we are also reverting back to all children entering and leaving school through the main entrance on Conewood Street.

School timings are as follows

8.50am The playground gate will open

8.55am Teachers will come to the playground to collect their classes

9am The playground gate will be closed and registers will be taken. Any child arriving after 9am will be marked late to class.

End of day

3.25pm The playground gate will be opened

3.30pm The bell will ring for the end of the day and children will begin to make their way onto the playground

3.40pm If a child is not collected by this point teachers will take them to the school office. A phone call home will be made, if we can't get in touch with parents we will take the children to Kidz Club until someone can come to collect them. Charges may be applied.

Can I please also ask parents to encourage your children to use the pavement rather than the road, in both the mornings at drop off and on the evenings for collection, as we have witnessed a number of children leaving school and running across the road without looking either way for oncoming traffic. We are very lucky that Conewood Street is an Islington School Street, but this does not mean cars cannot drive down it. All residents are able to drive along at any point, and there are still a large number of drivers who choose to drive down the street. Please help us to keep your children safe and street aware by encouraging them to walk on the pavement and not on the road.

We unfortunately had to end our Year 5 school journey early this week due to positive covid cases, but the children did have an amazing time whilst they were there, and I know Miss Davis, Heddy and Ruth enjoyed every moment with the children. As always our children's manners were commented upon by the staff at the PGL Centre and all adults were so impressed with their positive attitudes, resilience and determination of all the children. There is always next year to look forward to.





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At the end of the autumn term, Harry Oulton the schools Chair of Governors, wrote to you about the schools impending Ofsted inspection. We do not have any idea as to when this inspection will happen just that Ofsted are inspecting all primary schools who are currently graded as outstanding. We do know that one of the main points of interest in the new Ofsted framework is persistent absences and persistent lateness of children. If a school is seen to have issues around either of these, it is very difficult to say that the school is outstanding. This is something we are really struggling with currently, and we are really trying to help and support all parents with getting children to school and to be on time. If you know this is something you need help with, please do get in touch and we can look at ways in which we can support you.

Obviously thinking a lot about the judgements that Ofsted will or will not make about our school, I began to think about how we should be less focused on being graded outstanding or good, but more on what is excellent about our school, and there are so many things! I thought it might be nice to share just a few with you all at the end of each half term.

Inclusion

We really pride ourselves on being a very inclusive school. We have a large number of students with a number of additional needs within our school, and as a team we all work very hard to make sure their needs, and every child's needs, are met. To support those children with more additional needs we have a sensory room which can be used for interventions, a time out space or a space for specific interactive activities. We have an outdoor sensory circuit which can be accessed at any point by any of our children. We teach all of our children to understand, accept and celebrate difference in all of their forms, so that they are equipped for the wider world beyond St John's.

Sports

The changes we have made to PE this academic year have proved popular with everyone. The children tell me how much they now enjoy their PE lessons and parents stop me at the gate to tell me how their children's attitudes have completely changed towards PE since Sarah took over. We have entered so many sports competitions so far this year and came home with more medals than I have ever seen here at St John's. Our children are active, engaged and enthusiastic about a wide range of sports and this is wonderful to see.

French

With two fluent French speakers on the staff team, the passion for the French language exuberates from them and is passed on to the children. The children's confidence to speak the language is brilliant and their French accents are second to none. In reviewing how well our French offer has been going, we have decided to extend the teaching of French to Years 1 and 2 after the half term. We feel that by beginning at an earlier age with French songs and fun games, immersing children into the language can only help build a base on which to develop further in key stage 2.





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Kidz Club

Although only introduced in September, Kidz Club has been a real hit amongst parents and children alike. The fact that we now have wrap around childcare being provided on the school ground by school staff is amazing. The children who come to Kidz Club love it so much and often do not want to leave. We have had glowing reports from parents who know their children are safe, being cared for by people they know well and most importantly, are having fun.

I could continue writing all day about the excellent things we do and we offer here at St John's. One of the biggest and most important things I feel we have here that cannot be bought, taught or forced, is the real sense of community. That has been here since the day I arrived, continued through the whole of lockdown and is once again shining through in so many ways. Together we all have the same goal, wanting the best for the children, working and growing together to make sure we provide this.

However you spend you half term, I really hope it is a restful one. The world we live in seems extremely busy for all of us at the moment. I hope we all get a chance to relax and unwind.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Lindsey Hodgson

Head of School

