



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

Acting Headteacher: Ms Khan

Friday, September 11th, 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a wonderful first full week we have had at school! The children have transitioned onto their full timetable and have settled beautifully into their routines. They are engaged, working hard, and looking after one another. Thank you to all parents and carers who attended our meet the teacher meetings this week. The office team will email all presentation slides to you and upload them to our website for those who were unable to attend.

Reception Class

A huge well done to our new Reception families. It is wonderful to see how well the children have settled into their new environment. We understand that these first days can be emotional for both parents and carers, and we have observed some tearful moments as children say goodbye, and yes, we know that some children have held on tightly and been reluctant to let go of their parents' hands.

Please be assured that once the children enter the classroom, they settle quickly and engage happily with their learning. This is completely normal, and you can be confident that what you see at the gate is not what happens inside the classroom. Miss Bullen and Yasmina bring considerable experience and expertise to their work with this age group and have many wonderful strategies to support your child's transition to classroom learning. Your child is in very safe, caring, and capable hands.

Attendance

As we begin the new academic year, we would like to emphasise the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. Research consistently shows that children who attend school regularly make better progress academically and develop stronger social connections with their peers. Children who missed 10% or more of school sessions (persistent absence) had significantly lower attainment, with only 35.6% achieving grades 9–4 in English and maths, compared to 67.6% of all children. We ask for your support in ensuring your child arrives **on time** each day, as this allows them to settle into lessons without missing crucial learning. Starting the year with strong attendance habits helps children build momentum and confidence in their learning journey.

Illness

If your child is unwell, please ensure you call the school or email by 9am to let us know what is wrong with them if they are not able to come in. You can leave a message on the answer machine if calling before 8am or you can email. You should call the school each day a child is not in attendance, not just on the first day. If we do not hear from you, Clare will call you to ascertain the reason for absence. This is in line with our safeguarding and attendance policy.

Appointments during school hours

Should your child have an appointment (dentist, doctor, optician etc.) during school hours, please provide the school office with email or text confirmation from the surgery or an appointment card. The absence will be authorised if proof is given. It is of course preferable that appointments are arranged for outside of school time.





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Sweets, chocolate, biscuits, fizzy drinks and flavoured water

These are not allowed in school at all, including lunchtime. The only time that these items are allowed in school is for the end of term parties or very special events. If children have these items in their packed lunch, staff will ask that they are put back in their lunch box and the child will be offered fruit or bread as a replacement. Water or milk would be offered to replace any inappropriate drink.

Administration of medicines

If a child needs to take medication during the school day (e.g. antibiotics, Calpol, antihistamines etc) the medicine will be kept in the office. A parent or carer must hand the medicine in to the school office and sign a consent form.

The medicine container should be clearly labelled with the child's name, class, dosage and timing. Please note that this includes inhalers for asthma.

No child will be allowed to take or be given medication in school without the above being carried out.

Dogs

Dogs are not allowed in the school or the playground even on a lead. If you bring your dog to school, they must be tied up outside the gates (or Emily would be very happy to look after them!)

Emergency contact numbers

As you know, it is essential we have an emergency contact number in the event your child is ill or injured and we can't contact you. If your emergency contact changes during the year, please let us know of a change in details or contact the office. It is very distressing for a child and worrying for the school, if we cannot contact a parent, if a child is unwell.

Morning Transition

As the children settle into the routines, we would kindly ask for your support in helping us establish a calm start to each day. For many of our children, particularly those with SEND or sensory sensitivities, a predictable and peaceful morning transition is crucial in helping them feel settled and ready to learn without becoming overwhelmed.

We would be grateful if you could say goodbye to your child before the bell rings, allowing them to line up with their teacher. This clear, consistent routine helps all children—and especially those who find transitions challenging—to manage their emotions and prepare emotionally for the school day.

If we could also ask that conversations on the playground are kept to a gentle volume, this helps us transition smoothly into the classroom. Reduced noise supports learning focus and helps children with SEND avoid sensory overload as they move from the playground into a structured learning environment.

This request comes from a place of care and duty of care to all our pupils. By working together to create a calm environment, we support the wellbeing and learning readiness of every child in our community.





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New Behaviour and Relationships Policy

We hope you have had the opportunity to read our new Behaviour and Relationships Policy. We would very much welcome any feedback – positive or constructive – that you may wish to share. Please do send any comments via the office email address.

Sustainability and Responsibility

This year, we are working to develop children's understanding of sustainability and personal responsibility. One practical way you can support this is by labelling all of your child's clothing and belongings clearly. We have noticed that our lost property collection has grown considerably during this first week, containing many uniform items, water bottles, and lunchboxes. By encouraging your child to take responsibility for their belongings and supporting them in checking our lost property box rather than simply replacing items, we help them develop valuable life skills and an awareness of our environmental impact. This approach reflects our school's commitment to fostering independent, thoughtful learners who understand the importance of caring for their possessions.

We are a NUT AND SESAME FREE SCHOOL at all times – this includes lunchtime and packed lunches (no Nutella, chocolate hazelnut spread, peanut butter sandwiches, nut flavoured yoghurts, cereal bars containing nuts or coconut products) as well as food for trips, end of term parties, club snacks, snacks for swimming, the fairs and bake sales. If you are unsure, please check the ingredients label. We have several children with severe nut allergies, please help us to keep them safe.

Thank you for your support and partnership. We look forward to another wonderful week ahead.

Have a lovely weekend.

Warm regards,

Ms Khan

Key dates for next week

Tuesday 15th September - Reception Class Expectations Meeting - 9am

Friday 18th September - Year 3 Coffee Morning - 9am

