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Friday 25th September, 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Happy Friday! I wanted to give you an update about how we're settling in to our 'new normal' at school and update you on a few things.

Firstly, I want to emphasise again how lovely it is to have all the children back at school. The Knavesmire buzz is truly back! Virtual jam making in Year 6, optical illusions in Year 5, papier mâché heads in Year 4, drama in Year 3, Punch and Judy in Year 2, peg board patterns in Year 1, biscuit making in Reception and lots of imaginative play in the Home Corner in Nursery... to name simply one fun activity in each cohort! I am loving walking around school and seeing the children's smiles and hearing their banter so much. Here's hoping it continues at length.

Cohort PowerPoints:

In the good old 'normal' Autumn days, we used to invite parents into their child's new classroom to see their learning environment and talk to you about the typical things that your children do in school, as well as answer any questions. Unfortunately, due to the pesky pandemic, we are unable to invite you in, so instead, all the teachers have prepared some PowerPoint slides about their year group, which you can access on the school website, in your child's year group page, under 'Welcome to Year...'. We hope you find them useful.

Home Learning/Remote Home Learning:

We are going to start setting your children's homework via Google Classroom. If your child is in Key Stage Two, their homework will hopefully go out this way today, as we have managed to organise everyone's emails and passwords in time. KS1 are frustratingly not quite ready (this is due to technicalities out of our hands at present) but we are hoping that they will be ready to launch next week. Early Years will continue to use Tapestry. I have attached a parent's guide to accessing Google Classroom, which Miss Crosby, our Computing lead has made for you. We hope this will clarify how to access it at home. We recognise that some children may not have access to IT at home, so in these cases, paper homework will be set. Children may also bring home a



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Homework book this term but this is to be kept at home to use for certain tasks that teachers will set virtually, and are only to be brought back into school when the class teacher requests it, most likely at half term. Please keep them somewhere safe.

If we were to have a positive case of Covid-19 in school, whereby a Phase had to be off school for a fortnight, or indeed if individual children end up being off school for a duration, Google Classroom is how we are planning to share lessons and future learning. We have taken on board the feedback we received in July, from our Home Learning Survey, so we hope that you will see a positive development, if we should need to utilise Google Classroom more fully. We are also currently finalising a 'Remote Teaching and Learning Policy', which we will share via the school website once it is complete.

Reading:

Hopefully your child has now brought a school reading book home, which we ask you to ensure they read and re-read as much as possible. Our current rota is that books go home on a Thursday, so you have them over the weekend, and then we ask that they are brought in on a Monday. We are currently evaluating this practice. We are in the process of adapting all the hard work which Mrs Hunt did as our Reading Lead teacher last year, within the new Covid realms. Miss Kaberry has taken on the Reading Lead role, with Mrs Wareham focussing on reading for pleasure elements in school. We will be sharing our new vision over the next few weeks and our revised philosophy for reading at Knavesmire. This was all ready to launch as we went into lockdown and we'd bought lots of gorgeous new home reading books too, so we're keen to raise the reading profile again.

School dinners:

As you will have seen in today's newsletter, next Thursday we are offering a free hot dinner to children, which we hope lots of you will take advantage of. As you know, the children have been having their packed lunches in classrooms but we are now planning the next steps of being able to offer a hot dinner option again, which we are aiming to launch from 12th October.

Collection time in the playground:

We have been monitoring our home time arrangements and listening to parental feedback. Following Boris Johnson's announcement on Tuesday, please can we remind you to social distance as much as you can in the playground when you are waiting to collect your child. As soon as they are out of class, please leave school straight away via the main double gates on Campleshon Road, NOT via the side gates. We will be putting signs up on the gates this evening to remind people about the one way system at school, please adhere to this simple rule. If we feel that social distancing is not being followed, we are going to need to insist upon all adults wearing masks while on the school playground to reduce anxiety from others and keep us all safe. Please help us avoid this stipulation.

I hope that you are all keeping well and safe and enjoying our tweets, (if you are on Twitter), of what we're getting up to in class.

I'll be in touch again soon.

Take care, stay safe.

Hannah Gibson
Head of School

