



6th July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Moving Forward – Next Steps – September 2020 Foundation Stage 2

Following our letter to the school community on 29th June we are grateful for the many responses received – it has been made very clear to us by both parents and children (thanks to everyone who shared thoughts), that our 'preferred plan' is overwhelmingly the favoured way forward for children's return to us in Autumn 2020. We feel assured that this start in the Autumn, built upon children returning to their existing classroom, fellow classmates and adults, for half a term will support levels of comfort, attendance, engagement and ultimately learning, at a time that for so many children will feel like another significant change for them to negotiate.

As a school we are clear that the road to securing children's progress following the school's closure this year and the narrowing of any 'gaps' that have developed, is a responsibility that we are keen to take on. We recognise this journey is not a 'quick fix' and will demand commitment on our part. We also recognise that this job begins with ensuring a successful return to school for children – to adults who know them and recognise them as individuals and learners. This will enable needs to be met from day one, as well as a planned and considered transition to their next class following the Autumn half term.

As a result of the school community's shared perspective, we have been working relentlessly to explore options available to us that will support the operation of the school in the first half of the Autumn Term.

In spite of significant financial and practical resources being directed to the support of this decision, having undertaken a thorough exploration of all possible alternatives available to us, it is clear to us that we will need your support as a parent of a child entering Reception in September 2020. We are keen to meet the transition needs of every child entering Reception throughout the first half of the Autumn Term, a process already delayed due to the ongoing pandemic. As such we'd wish to propose a programme of attendance and engagement for your child that will begin on Monday 14th September, and see them ultimately attending the setting full-time following the Autumn half term break.

We feel sure that the programme we are proposing will allow your child to transition in a planned and staged way, that will see their early experiences of the setting taking place with appropriately reduced numbers of children in the provision. This will allow comfort to be built and relationships to be cultivated in a way which will underpin their successful development throughout the year. Similarly to children across the school we feel that this must be done sensitively, from a starting point that mirrors their experiences to date for those familiar with the environment, and even more carefully for those joining us for the first time.

We cannot fail to ignore that your commitment to this way forward will not only, in our view, best support your own child, it will also be a key factor in allowing our approach to support every child's return to Haytor View being handled sensitively and effectively. Whilst initially we accept that the proposals we are making may on the face of it, represent a compromise of your child's entitlement, we believe that the long term outcome of this approach will be a positive one for all concerned. Of course, when transition is completed at Autumn Half term, you will continue to receive the same level of consideration, commitment and responsiveness to your child's needs over the next seven years.

So what will engagement with the school look like for my child entering Reception during first half of the Autumn Term?

We are pleased to be accepting close to our capacity of 30 children into Reception this year. With around 30 existing Reception (Year 1 in September) children remaining in the setting, we have planned carefully the transition weeks for your child detailed below. We are clear that the schedule planned will bring your child the care, consideration and attention they deserve, together with a focus upon their learning needs, particularly following the recent absence of school in their lives.

Week beginning 14th September

- Monday to Thursday - Children and parents will be invited to join sessions with a small number of other children/parents from their base present. At this time further arrangements will be made for the rest of the week. These will be led by Miss Butler our Early Years Leader.
- Friday – All children and parents, where appropriate, will be invited to join a full session in either the morning (8.30 – 11.30am) or afternoon (12.20 – 3.20pm). This introduction to a busier environment will see children meeting more of their peers.

Weeks beginning 21st September, 28th September and 5th October

- Children (and parents where appropriate) will continue to join the setting in either morning sessions (8.30 – 11.30am) or for the afternoon (12.20-3.20pm). For those children familiar with Haytor View, the timing of these sessions will match their previous experiences in Nursery/Foundation 1.
- During this period, children who have progressed from Nursery/Foundation 1 into Reception will be mirroring children across the school in returning to their previously known provision.

Week beginning 12th October

- Children attending the morning session will take part in a 'lunch experience' which will see them at 11.00am visit 'EAT' (the school's dining area) and have lunch. Parents will be invited to join their children for this experience to develop a sense of what this period will look like for them.
- Children attending the afternoon session will continue with previous arrangements.

Week beginning 19th October

- Children attending the afternoon session will take part in a 'lunch experience' which will see them at 12.30pm visit 'EAT' (the school's dining area) and have lunch. Parents will be invited to join their children for this experience to develop a sense of what this period will look like for them.
- Children attending the morning session will continue with arrangements without lunch experiences.

Week beginning 26th October is Half Term week

Week beginning 2nd November – forever(!)

- Children will attend the Foundation Stage provision for full days - Start of the day 8.35-8.50am, finish at 3.15pm.
- Nursery children will be introduced to the setting as part of a separate transition programme at this time.

So what next?

With so much to take in, within a landscape where at the moment much seems to be changing, we are keen to hear from you and we hope secure your comfort with this approach. With this in mind we will give you a call over the coming days to clarify arrangements in place and our hopes for your child going forward. We would be grateful for any time that you feel able to give us as we continue to plan next steps for your child, alongside those whose journey with us is already underway.

Following this we will write to you ahead of the summer break, providing you with exact details of provision for your child during the first half of the Autumn Term. Of course should you wish, please feel free to get in touch with us at any time as this may be a more comfortable and convenient option for you.

Yours sincerely,

Katy Galling
Head of Learning and Development

Niema Bohrayba
Chair of Governing Board