

23rd October 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

Thank you for your support over this half term in what has been a very different one for us all. Tight Covid-compliant procedures have meant that school has looked a bit different in many ways but the children have adapted well and routines are now well established. In fact, I have been amazed at the children's resilience and ability to understand the current situation. Handwashing has never been better!

Well done to all our Foundation children who have completed their first half term. Again, it has been amazing to see the progress these young children have made in such a short time and we are very proud of the way they have integrated into our school. If you know of any families that are looking for a school place for their four year old in September, please do encourage them to get in touch with us.

Most of you would have booked parent consultations online or by phone for the first week back - another new experience for us all! I know our teachers are looking forward to the opportunity to talk with you and we are hoping that the technology will be kind to us - please bear with us as it's the first time some of our staff members have used this format before.

Home learning

This half term we have been looking at ways we can facilitate online home learning. We have invested in some excellent IT programs which can be used at home as well as in school. This will support not only learning from home should a child have to isolate, but also setting our weekly homework. More information about this and all the children's log-in details will be sent out after half term.

Start and finish times

Thank you to those of you who sent in your thoughts about the proposed changes to the start and finish times. As a staff, we have thought long and hard about the benefits this will bring to our children's learning so such decisions are not taken lightly and your comments have been taken seriously.

Start times

However, I do understand that the change in start times in particular, are proving more difficult for some of you - especially at such short notice. We have therefore decided that the change in the children's start times will come into effect from January, when children return after the Christmas break. This will give time for parents to make appropriate arrangements and will also allow us to adapt our breakfast provision to help our families. This will include providing the Early Bird club at a discounted rate for our pupils who are in receipt of Pupil Premium funding.

Finish times

From after half term, we would like to change the finish times to avoid disruption in classrooms where some children are leaving much earlier than their peers:

Foundation, Years 1 & 2 = 2.50pm

Years 3 & 4 = 3.00pm

Years 5 & 6 = 3.10pm

'Colours of Autumn' Art Day

What a fantastic 'Colours of Autumn' Art Day we all had on Tuesday. The children really enjoyed the experience of letting their imaginations flow through art. Please take a look at the school website www.coldharbourschool.org.uk under the Key Information, Curriculum, Creative Curriculum tabs to see the amazing creations that your super children have produced!

Data Collection Sheets

Please could you return the Data Collection Sheet that was sent home last week. This will ensure that we have the most up to date details. Please could you check, amend as necessary, sign and return the form to school via class teachers as soon as possible. If there are no changes, please sign and return so that we know it has been checked.

After School Sports Clubs

Letters were sent by ParentMail PMX this week regarding after school sports clubs for years 1, 2, 3 & 6. Please return the reply slip if you wish your child to attend.

'Flu immunisation

Don't forget to sign your child up for the 'flu immunisation if you wish them to receive it. These will be administered on Thursday 5th November. The deadline for applications is **Thursday 29th October**. Please see the letter which was sent via ParentMail PMX on 12th October for details of how to sign up.

Pupil Premium Funding

Pupil Premium funding is available to all families who qualify. You can make an application using the following link - <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims>

Who is eligible?

You must be in receipt of one of the benefits listed below:

- Income Support
- Employment & Support Allowance – Income related
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (**not Contribution Based JSA**)
- Child Tax Credit only (with a combined family income of less than £16,190 per annum as assessed by HM Revenues & Customs) **Please note, anyone receiving Working Tax Credit, regardless of income, will not qualify for free school meals.**
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you receive)
- National Asylum Seekers Support (NASS)
- Guaranteed Element of Pension Tax Credits

Teaching Road Safety: A Guide for Parents

The clocks go back this weekend. At this time of year, as nights become darker earlier, road safety awareness is even more important. The following link provides some guidance for parents which you may find useful.

<https://www.rosopa.com/media/documents/road-safety/teaching-road-safety-a-guide-for-parents.pdf>

MK Food Bank Xtra

The MK Food Bank and Milton Keynes Council have joined forces to provide thousands of food parcels to MK families during COVID-19 through MK Food Bank Xtra. If you have school age children and will be without enough food over the half term break, give them a call - even if you're not usually eligible or have already had the maximum number of parcels they can typically supply. They're also donating a Fruit boost so every parcel will include fresh fruit. **Helpline: 0300 303 4933** www.mkfoodbank.org.uk

Milton Keynes Council - Advice for Halloween

Milton Keynes Council is asking local families to take extra precautions if they are planning Halloween activities this year, in light of COVID-19.

"Cases of COVID-19 have been rising rapidly in Milton Keynes. We all need to continue to take action to keep our families and communities safe and protect our NHS. When celebrating Halloween please be sensible and stay safe – and look for different ways to enjoy Halloween this year."

Please see the advice from MK Council at the end of this letter.

Y6 Applications for a Secondary School place - September 2021

A final reminder that applications have to be made by **31st October 2020**. A late application means you are less likely to get any of your preferred places so please ensure you meet the deadline.

Have a great half term and thank you for your continued support. A reminder that school opens again to all children on **Tuesday 3rd November**.

Kind regards,

Claire

MK Council Guidance: Should we go trick or treating?

Milton Keynes is currently at the lowest Government COVID-19 alert level, medium, which means gatherings inside and out of up to six people are allowed. However, local cases of the virus are rising, and the council's public health experts are asking people to think twice about whether to go trick or treating at all.

Stops at multiple houses – where some vulnerable people may be shielding and may already feel concerned about answering the door – increases the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Please remember:

- People with any symptoms of COVID-19 (new continuous cough, raised temperature, change or loss of sense of taste or smell) must isolate and shouldn't take part in any activities
- Groups should be no larger than six, indoors or outdoors
- Social distancing rules apply, so if you're trick or treating please step back when you knock at a door
- Use hand sanitiser regularly, and wash hands before going out and when you get back – before eating sweets
- If someone doesn't feel comfortable answering their door, don't keep knocking
- Buy packaged sweets to share, and consider leaving them on your doorstep individually - rather than unwrapped treats in a bowl



Five alternatives to trick or treating:

- Have a pumpkin trail in your street or neighbourhood... Help children carve or draw pumpkins and place them in your window. Neighbouring children can have fun pumpkin spotting. You could give your children prizes for the number of pumpkins they spot.
- Watch a Halloween film.... Even young children can enjoy some family favourites. MK Council is funding MyCinema throughout the October half term with 12 spooky drive in films shown. Thanks to council funding it costs just £5 per car with all proceeds going to MK Food Bank. Films will be announced on 19 October on the booking site at mymiltonkeynes.co.uk/my-cinema
- Have a virtual trick or treat with friends and family... Arrange to be around in advance and share your costumes via video call or just share a spooky joke over the phone – every call made could mean a treat goes in the trick or treat bucket/bag.
- Have fun decorating your house... There are lots of templates and crafting ideas online.
- Have a Halloween scavenger hunt... Give children a list of Halloween themed decorations to look for on a walk, such as spiders, cobwebs or ghosts. Or hide treats around your house and set clues to find them.