Dear Parents

So just as we were all getting used to the ‘new normal’ … here we are back in national lockdown! Although, I think we can all agree that this time things do feel rather different, with some of the stricter guidelines and laws not returning and, of course, schools remaining open to all children; it would have been such a shame if the happiness and progress of the children over the last months had been reset with further school closures. This said, it is vital that as a school community we very clearly recognise and respect the fact that, for the whole country, this is a new stage in managing the virus and we need to behave accordingly.

As both national and local infection rates are on the rise, there is a definite sense that the virus is closer to home. With this in mind I felt it vital to dedicate the newsletter this week to a polite set of reminders, regarding the rules and regulations we have put in place to keep the whole school community as safe as we can – children, teachers and staff, parents and the local residents.

**KEY POINTS THAT ARE VITAL TO MAINTAIN:**

1 **Physical distancing (2m plus) MUST, MUST, MUST be adhered to** – respect for everyone’s health and mental well-being is paramount and this is the simplest and clearest indication we are all taking this seriously! Even if you have bumped into someone that you haven’t seen for a while and the sun is shining, please stay 2m apart and set the example our children need to see:

 Remain two metres apart when waiting to collect;

 Keep your children with you (within hand holding distance) – not running around the playground;

 Move into the playground from the gate to avoid congestion;

 Once outside the gates make a timely departure – please avoid standing around outside the gates to socialise – again avoiding congestion.

2 **Everyone must stick to their drop off times** – this is something that over the last half term was generally maintained by the majority. However, for this adjustment to have the effect we hope it can the timings for drop offs are essential to prevent the cross contamination of bubbles – this is key to keeping the school open as much as possible to as many children as possible. I recognise that having siblings in different drop off and pick up times is a challenge, but it is one that with care and a little planning is easy enough to maintain.

3 While **children walking to school** is a fantastic way for them to build healthy lifestyles please can we ensure that they are leaving at a sensible time to walk at a good pace to get to school within their time slot. At present we have lots of Year 5 and 6 children walking and arriving in the Year 3 and 4 time slot – again crossing of bubbles is something we really must be avoiding!

4 We **maintain our no parents in the school building policy** – on the very rare occasion that anyone needs to come into reception, we ask that masks are worn and hand sanitiser is immediately used.

5 **Parking** – please park with consideration for the safety of the children and families walking to school, the local community who need to be able to use the roads around their homes safely and the general population using the local roads.

I am extremely conscious that this is not the most positive return-to-a-half-term newsletter ever written, but it feels such an important time to re-iterate the fact that we all have a duty of care for our whole school community, and these simple measures are the fundamentals of doing just that! On behalf of the school can I thank you in advance for your continued support and proactive approach during the current lockdown and beyond!

On a more positive note, the half term started with all the vigour and enthusiasm we have come to take for granted at St Hilary – parent consultations (thank you for your support with this), classes contributing to whole school ZOOM assemblies, PE afternoons, amazing project work! In addition to this we have the promise of an exciting week next week, with both a national TT Rockstars competition and the Cornwall’s virtual school winter games!

Here is to another happy, healthy, positive half term – let’s hope the sun keeps shining, at least for the weekend!

All the best

Rob Hamshar