



Highcliffe St. Mark Primary School & Fledglings Pre-School

A Church of England Foundation School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back! We hope you have all enjoyed a wonderful summer break and are looking forward to the new school year as much as we are.

This letter contains some important reminders and updates to help ensure a smooth return to school. Please take a few moments to read each section.

Start and Finish Times and Gate Information

Year Group/class	Recommended gate	Dropping off and Picking up
Foundation Starlings and Nightingales	Greenways Playground Gate or gate by the Office	Gate opens at 8.45am Learning begins at 8.50am entry via classroom door
Year 1	Greenways Playground Gate	Gate opens at 8.45am Learning begins at 8.50am entry via classroom door
Year 2 Robins	Main Greenways Gate Year 2 gate near school office	Gate opens at 8.45am Learning begins at 8.50am entry via classroom door
Year 2 Sparrows and Blackbirds	Greenways Playground Gate Year 2 gate to right of carpark or via Greenways Playground Gate	Gate opens at 8.45am Learning begins at 8.50am entry via classroom door
Year 3 - 6	Chewton Common Entrance or Sports playground gate (via main gate)	Gate opens at 8.40am Learning begins at 8.45am Teachers meet/dismiss children on the playground

Pick up Arrangements

All gates open at 3.05pm. Children in Foundation and KS1 are dismissed at 3.10pm and will be dismissed from their classroom door. Children in KS2 are dismissed at 3.15pm from the KS2 playground by teaching staff. Pick up points for KS2 are the same as their drop off point in the morning. From the carpark the order of year groups is year 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Attendance

We remind parents that good attendance is highly valued in our school. Children's attendance is closely monitored and we aim to work in partnership with parents where there are concerns. Term time absence can only be approved in exceptional circumstances and BCP Council does issues fines if the criteria for this is met. Please also note the start times in the table above. Learning really does begin as soon as the day starts and every late arrival costs your child valuable learning time.

Uniform

As we return to our full uniform expectations, please ensure that children are wearing the correct school uniform and appropriate footwear.

We would also ask parents to revisit our [Uniform Policy](#), particularly regarding jewellery and earrings. On PE days, clothing should be plain and free from large logos and earrings should be removed before school.



PROUD TO BE A
MUSIC MARK
SCHOOL
2023 - 2024



Lunch Orders

Following parent feedback, lunch pre-ordering has been reduced to one week in advance. Please use Arbor to place your child's lunch orders and take a look at the updated menu [on our website](#).

Crossing on Hinton Wood Avenue

BCP have informed us that the planned pedestrian crossing on Hinton Wood Avenue has been delayed and is now due to be installed in October.

In the meantime, our usual crossing patroller will remain in place. However, he is on leave until 7th September so there will be no crossing patrol during this period. Please take extra care when crossing with children.

Benedict's Law

New legislation, known as Benedict's Law, comes into effect in September 2026 and relates to supporting children with severe allergies who may require emergency medication, such as an EpiPen. We are pleased to reassure families that many of the requirements were already in place at our school. Our [policy](#) has been updated and all staff will receive the appropriate training so that we continue to provide a safe environment for all children.

Reading Books

Teachers will assess children during the first few days of term to ensure that those who require a reading book receive one that is matched to their level.

Please continue to read regularly with your child and record each session in their reading record. Information for families of our youngest children will be shared by the Foundation Team shortly.

Swimming

Mr Ottewill has worked hard to prepare the pool over the summer. While we have experienced some issues with the filtration system, most have now been resolved and only one issue remains.

We remain hopeful that swimming sessions will begin before the weather changes and will update families as soon as we know more.

If your Child has Forgotten Something

The office can be very busy in the mornings. We are asking for parent's support to minimise the traffic in the office, particularly first thing in the morning. If you need to drop a forgotten water bottle, coat, lunch box etc please place items on the shelving unit under the canopy and use the labels provided to let us know the class your child is in (items should already be labelled with your child's name). The office team will take these items to your child as soon as they are able to.

Events and Dates

Key dates for this term will be published in the first edition of *Headlines* on Friday 4th September. We will continue to give as much notice as possible for upcoming events.

For families who are new to the school, we have also produced a special edition of *Headlines* explaining our events and how they work. This will be sent alongside the main *Headlines* next Friday.

OFSTED

Following our inspection in June 2024, we are now entering the period in which OFSTED may return to visit the school.

As a community, we have achieved a great deal together over the past two years. We have worked hard to raise standards, strengthen safeguarding, improve behaviour and ensure that every child feels valued, included and supported to succeed. We are proud of the progress our pupils are making and of the strong partnerships we have developed with families. Your feedback, ideas and challenge have helped shape many of the improvements we have made and continue to make.

OFSTED place significant value on the views of parents when evaluating a school. As we move into the period when inspectors will return, we encourage all parents and carers to share their views through the OFSTED Parent View website. Whether your experience relates to your child's learning, wellbeing, support or opportunities at school, your feedback helps inspectors understand life at our school from a parent's perspective. Parent View remains open at all times and can be accessed [here](#).

Thank you to all those families who continue to support the school, challenge us to improve and work in partnership with us.

School Trips

Many families are aware of the challenges we have faced in securing enough voluntary contributions to cover the cost of school trips. Last academic year there was an overall shortfall of £2249. This figure does not include trips subsidised through Pupil Premium funding for eligible families.

Unfortunately, the school cannot continue to absorb these costs indefinitely. We have therefore reached the point where we must review our approach to educational visits and consider whether external trips can continue for every year group. We will keep parents informed once decisions have been made.

Parent Representatives

We have greatly valued the contribution of our Parent Representatives and would like to invite our current representatives to continue in their role this year if they wish to do so.

Feedback from this group has helped shape a number of our policies and practices, and we are grateful for the time and insight they have given.

We would also welcome additional representatives, as not every class and year group is currently represented. The commitment is one meeting each half term (approximately one hour in the evening), along with some communication before and after meetings to gather and share the views of other parents.

If you would like to become a Parent Representative, or continue in the role, please contact the school office.

Finally

If you cannot find the information you need in this letter, please visit our updated website or contact the school office.

We look forward to welcoming all of our children back and to another successful year together.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs Barker