

HIGH HESKET C of E SCHOOL (VC)

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Friday 6th September 2024

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the new school year. We have thoroughly enjoyed our first few days with the Reception children. Here is some key information that you might find useful to know. Please remember that if you need to chat with me about anything then please get in touch. The best way to do so is via my email, jenny.blenkham@high-hesket.cumbria.sch.uk and we can arrange a suitable time for a phone call or meeting if necessary.

Spare Clothes, Wellingtons, Waterproofs and Outdoor Clothing

We are very lucky to have such a wonderful outdoor area and the children have access to this every day. If you haven't done so already, could you please provide a pair of (named) wellingtons to be kept in school for outdoor play. Children should also have their coats with them on a daily basis, although we do have a small supply of waterproof jackets and trousers for wet and windy play.

Some of the children may occasionally need a change of clothes. You are more than welcome to leave some spare clean clothes in your child's book bag or in a bag on their peg. We also have some spare clothes within the unit. If your child is sent home in spare school clothing, could we please ask that you wash and return these items in a carrier bag.

School bags

You will notice that your child has come home with a book bag today, if they do not already have one. Please can we request that this is your child's primary bag that they bring to school. If you feel that your child needs additional to this then a smaller bag is preferable as space within the classroom is limited.

Tapestry

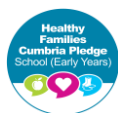
As you will already be aware we use 'Tapestry' for our online learning journal. We will add observations of your child over the year. You can access these observations and even add your own so that you can share your child's achievements away from school. If you need any further support with Tapestry, please let me know.

Our Topic

For the first few weeks we will be focusing on settling in activities and learning our new routines. We will also be finding out about ourselves, each other's families and sharing our holiday books. On top of this we will be recognising Fairtrade Fortnight and celebrating Harvest.

PE days

In Reception, the children are physically active every day and we make the most of our fantastic outdoor area. In addition to this, we also have focused PE sessions where we teach specific skills such as throwing and catching, dodging and teamwork. We do this during our allocated PE lessons which this term will take place on Thursdays and Fridays, commencing this coming Thursday 12th September. We are asking that, on these days only, the children come to school already dressed in their PE kits which they will wear for the day. A reminder that the school PE kit consists of a white t-shirt (an optional white t-shirt with the school logo can be purchased from BE Uniforms in Carlisle) and black shorts, tracksuit trousers or leggings. The children should come to school in their school sweatshirt/cardigan on these days but may wish to have a change of sweatshirt/hoodie to change in to for the PE session. We do also ask that children have footwear with a suitable sole for outdoors, ideally trainers with velcro rather than plimsolls. As always, please ensure that all clothing is clearly named.



Snack and Water Bottles

All children in Early Years have a mid-morning snack each day consisting of fruit and a drink of either water or milk. Children can bring their own bottle from home or we can provide one in school, whichever you prefer. Please can we ask that your child brings their water bottle to school empty every Monday and we will send them home at the end of the week. The tops of the school water bottles do tend to get chewed so if you require a new top, they are available for 10p, or you can purchase a new water bottle for 50p. These can be purchased from the classroom.

Baseline assessment

At the beginning of the Reception year, all children in England have to complete a Baseline assessment. The purpose of the assessment is to provide a starting point for a new measure that will help parents understand how schools support their pupils to progress between Reception and Year 6. The assessments are short and practical and focus on the areas of communication, language, literacy and maths, and will be administered by myself. If you have any further questions about the Baseline Assessment, please get in touch. Our privacy notice relating to how data is stored and shared can be found on our school website if required.

'Make and do' area.

The 'make and do' area is a very popular part of our provision. It contains a selection of junk modelling materials which have been brought in from home by children and adults. If you would like to donate some junk modelling materials, these would be very gratefully received – especially cardboard boxes and tubes. Please send them into school in a carrier bag with your child.

Google Classroom

We use Google classroom as a platform to support our learning both in school and at home. In the next week or so, you will receive your child's login details and a guide to getting started with Google classroom. By logging in to your child's Google Classroom account you will then be able to access any further resources we provide to support you and your child with their learning at home.

Read, Write, Inc.

Once the children have settled into class and we have completed the Baseline Assessment, we will be starting to introduce Read, Write, Inc. phonics with them all. I understand that this approach to teaching reading and writing is familiar to some of you, but new to others. To help explain how we approach learning to read in school I will be in touch with further information in the near future. In the meantime, letter sound sheets will be placed in the children's book bags for you to share at home each time we learn a new sound, as well as being uploaded to Google Classroom, so that you can access these in whichever way suits you best. This is a simple way for the children to consolidate their learning by explaining the sounds to you, as well as practising them further, at home.

Thank you again and please remember if you have any queries about anything please do not hesitate to get in touch via the e-mail address above.

J Blenkham

Jenny Blenkham (Reception class teacher).

