



Planning for 8th March

The return of all children to school is greatly welcomed by all of us. However, we must all remember that we are only returning to similar levels of restrictions and risks as the autumn term, and therefore we still have our detailed Main Risk Assessment and Specific Guidance Documents in operation. This week, I have been working with the staff team to review all of these documents and I expect them to be approved by the school governors and up on our website by the middle of next week. We will make the school as safe as possible whilst still being able to function like a school. I will write separately to parents and carers in each year group next week with specific information with regards to how your year group will operate. I am keeping any changes to an absolute minimum.

We are working towards a Class Bubble system for Years 1 to 6 and we will continue with the Year Group Bubble system for Nursery and Reception. Whichever system your child is in, we will still have some staff working across bubbles, so whilst the risk of bubble closure is reduced, it is not eliminated completely. Just like before the Christmas holiday, parents need to have plans in place in case we need to close a bubble down with little or no notice.

We do not want to see levels of infection rise again in our community, so it is everyone's responsibility to adhere to the national, local and school rules in order to protect each other. We will be continuing with staggered start and end times to the school day, so parents will need to help us by sticking to the set times, wearing masks (unless exempt) and not congregating directly inside or outside the school gates. I really appreciate it that families will be delighted to see each other when we return (the family feel is real strength of the Hitherfield community), but families will need to move away from the school entrances if they wish to have socially distanced conversations. It is also important that families follow the national rules outside of school to reduce the likelihood of transmission.

I am pleased that the government's current plans indicate that the summer term should see us returning slowly to normal school life.

Have a safe weekend,

Chris Ashley-Jones,
Executive Headteacher



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LET THERE BE LIGHT

I was prompted to write this article for this week's Hitherfield Herald by the opening sentence of Mr Ashley-Jones's "Editorial" letter in the last issue before the break – he described the last few school weeks as "the strangest half term" of his career. Personally, I think we can all say that the last year has been the strangest year of our lives.

But the huge reduction in the number of Covid cases, the huge success of the vaccination programme and the mass increase in testing (and I appreciate that many of you have been caught up in the mass testing lately because just ONE case of the South African variant was found on the Streatham / Norwood border) combine to mean that all children will be able to return to school in 10 days' time as the first step on the road to whatever the new normal will be which will hopefully be in place and final before the current school year comes to an end.

I am writing this on behalf of the whole Hitherfield Governing Body. I want to echo Mr Ashley-Jones's comments in that last issue of Herald but, on behalf of Governors, I want to take it a little bit further.

We are all very proud of the Hitherfield community as everyone has risen to the challenges, and the constantly changing challenges, that the last year has brought, and I want to thank and congratulate everyone on the way in which they have done so – Mr Ashley-Jones and the rest of the Senior Leadership Team, all the staff, all the children and all of you. The pressures, the changes, the stress – we have all had to adapt to new ways of working and everyone deserves a thank you, a congratulations, and a pat on the back, but quite frankly those will never be enough!

Well done and thank you, everyone!

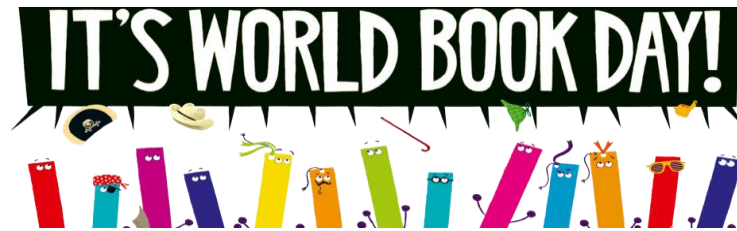
And I just want to conclude by returning to the subject of the Covid-19 vaccination programme. I hope that many readers have already been invited for, and indeed have already received, their first jabs (and I was lucky enough to get mine during half-term week). But I also know that there is a lot of anxiety out there that might be causing a significant number of you to be declining or reserving judgement on whether you should have your jabs.

I understand those concerns – I have been entitled to flu jabs for nearly 14 years but so far have always declined them, but I rushed to book this one when I received the invitation. The only side effect I felt was a sore arm for a few hours overnight – that's a very small price to pay for something that will defeat this disease, make us all feel much safer, much happier and much more relaxed, and enable us all to resume our normal activities to as great an extent as possible.

I urge you all to get your jabs as soon as you are invited to do so!

Simon Hooberman
Chair of Governors





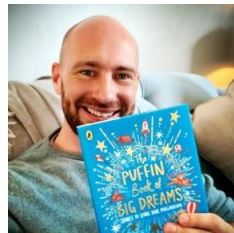
World Book Day is (virtually) coming to Hitherfield Primary School!

Thursday 4th March 2021!

With sessions on Seesaw and Tapestry from...



Storyteller Wendy Shearer



Author Henry White



Newsround Presenter De-Graft Mensah



Author Natalie Reeves Billing

Among many other amazing activities!

Our theme this year is...



Can you dress up as your favourite book character and win your year group's costume competition?



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Baking Class:

On the first Saturday of half term, Rachel Dobson ran a very successful Zoom baking masterclass for the children. We had over 35 children take part and the pictures of the biscuits they made looked phenomenal! Here's a taster of a few and a huge thanks to Rachel for giving up her time and making it such fun.



Children's Movement & Breathwork Class with Lucy Rix Saturday 27th February 2pm

Lucy has once again agreed to run a movement workshop, this time for the children. She's put together a fun 30 minute class mixing animal movements, breathing exercises and self massage all aimed at easing anxiety and helping the children feel connected. All ages welcome and if you have outside space, can be done outside in the beautiful weather that's forecast for tomorrow!!!



We are once again running an online version of our annual quiz night on Thursday March 18th. The Children's Quiz will run from 6.30pm until 7.30pm followed by the Adult's Quiz from 8pm onwards. It was great fun last year so please do sign up and enter your household by emailing hitherfieldpta@gmail.com.

Uniform:

Now we're hopefully gearing up for a return to school, if anyone needs any school uniform, please let us know either on the Facebook page or by emailing us on hitherfieldpta@gmail.com. We have jumpers and cardigans in most age groups as well as trousers, dresses and skirts.



Peace of Mind & Resilience Workshop with Maren Enkleman Wednesday 3rd March 8pm

This one is for the adults! Maren teaches wellbeing and resilience to children and teenagers in schools and has put together this workshop specifically to help us find ours in this crazy time.

She says "Peace of mind has become a bit of a holy grail. Not only do we feel better with it, we make better choices, sleep better and we get more done. Who doesn't want more of it ideally all the time?"

The workshop explores what peace of mind actually is and why it's so hard to find the more we go looking for it. What gets in the way? The same applies to resilience. We treat it like a skill to build, yet why do our trusted techniques work brilliantly on some and not so well on others? What is resilience, really, and how do we get good at it?

Please email hitherfieldpta@gmail.com to register your interest in either or both of these workshops.



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Pupils **PTA** school
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rewarding events
organisation
ideas
teachers