



Nursery School

Newsletter 4th January

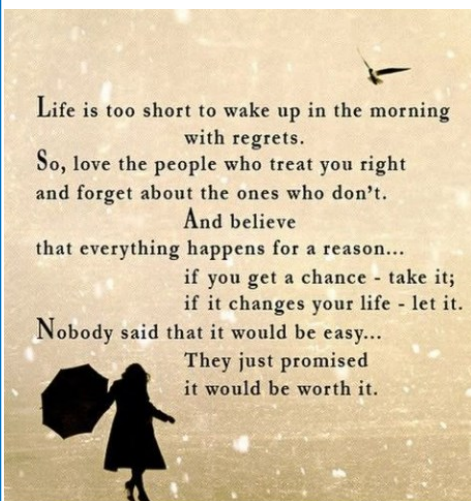
2022

Headteacher Update!

Happy New Year to each and everyone of you! I do hope you have had an opportunity to see loved ones and a taste of a slightly more 'normal' Christmas than the previous. I am aware many people have been ill over the Christmas period I hope you are recovering well if that's been the case. It is with great pleasure that I write this newsletter on my return to work after a number of medical procedures. I am excited to be back having missed the children, families and staff so much! Can I take this opportunity to thank Louise, Natalie and the rest of the team for stepping up and continuing to deliver such high standards of care and education whilst I have been away. I feel they have done a sterling job during a particularly difficult time of year.



A huge welcome to our new families who start this month. We are looking forward to getting to know more families and welcoming them into the Highfield family. I appreciate starting nursery can be difficult at the best of times, this may be the first time your child has left their main carer. The pandemic has made this even more difficult, we have seen some children really struggle to settle, however staff are excellent at knowing and understanding our children and what is best for them and their family. We **individualise your** child's settling in procedure to their needs and take as little or as long as **they** need.



As always we pride ourselves with the relationships we develop with our parents and families and know this is vital for the success of your child. Covid regulations have made our open door policy a little trickier, however we can work around them. If you would like a meeting with a member of staff we are requesting this is done via phone call or zoom if possible, if not we request parents wear a facemask and stay 2 metres plus from staff members. If you need an informal, quick chat at the beginning / end of a session please keep a safe distance outside and/or wear a face mask. Thank you for your continued understanding in this matter. We are hoping these restrictions are short term, they will be reviewed at the end of January 2022.

Myself, Louise, Natalie and Rachel our Family Support Worker; are here to help you with emotional support you may need as well as a range of support including food parcels, debt/benefits, behaviour management, mental health ... the list is endless. Please ring or speak to us if we can help.

I'm looking forward to seeing all of you and your beautiful children over the next week or so. I will continue to work across both schools, so if you need to speak to me and can't see me please arrange a meeting or phone call via the office staff. Wishing you good health for 2022.

Sue X

Covid-19 I apologise having to start another newsletter with more information and challenges around the pandemic. I hope very soon it won't appear in the regular newsletters and we can all just get on with our lives!

As I am sure you are aware local and national rates are high. The Omicron variant is highly transmissible. Subsequently this has led to significantly high rates in Lancashire once again. Chorley's rates are currently 1,676.3 per 100,000, 2nd Jan 2022.

As always, our priority is to remain **open to all** children and deliver face-to-face care and education to all. Our challenge lies in staff availability; therefore it is essential we as a whole school community do everything we can to prevent staff, and children contracting Covid-19. There is a shortage of early years supply staff plus little room for manoeuvre within our current staffing ratios- as most staff are currently working full time—it will be very difficult to cover staff if they are isolating and/or ill. We will do everything possible to remain open to all children. However, if a high number of staff are absent, we may need to reduce the number of sessions some children attend or close class groups for a short period of time until we have enough staff to cover ratios and deliver care in a safe environment. **I stress this would be our last possible option and not one we would like to implement.** Staff shortages are our biggest challenge going into the spring term. If we were required to close groups, we would do our utmost to remain open to vulnerable children and those of key workers. Let's hope this will not be the case.

Continued ...

COVID-19 thank you for all your continued support with COVID-19 measures in nursery.

In order to reduce the risk of transmission, we are asking parents to follow measures in the risk assessment consistently. The full risk assessment can be found on the website or by emailing the office staff. Measures we are asking parents to take include:

- We encourage all parents who feel happy and confident to test their child prior to their return to nursery in January and thereafter throughout January. This will help to protect children and staff during a time of particularly high rates locally.
- Adhere to social distancing measures when on nursery grounds.
- Wear a mask if you are required to come into nursery, unless exempt.
- It is vitally important any child or staff member who develops symptoms of covid-19 are sent home, taken for a PCR test and isolate until a negative result is obtained. Or alternatively isolates for 7-10 days, following self-isolation guidance.
- We strongly advise parents to take their child for a PCR test if someone in the household tests positive. It is vitally important to help reduce transmission of the Omicron variant .
- Inform nursery office as soon as your child develop symptoms or has a positive test result. We are obliged to report all cases of children and staff. To help identify a possible outbreak.

Weather Change We love getting outside to learn no matter what the weather is! With the weather getting colder we would like to ask all parents to please ensure that children come to nursery in warm winter coats, wellies if we haven't already got them on site and hats and gloves when necessary. Please remember to put your child's name in all their clothes including hats , gloves and shoes.



We need your help We still have places available for Easter and September , for both 2 and 3-4 year olds, please spread the word and tell your friends and the community how great we are! Even if parents are apprehensive about sending their child to nursery during the pandemic they can still put their child's name down and we will reserve them a place and send home remote learning ideas and packs. Please promote us through Facebook , share and like our posts as well as word of mouth.



30 hour childcare—if your child turns 3 before 31/03/2021; and you believe that you may be eligible for 30 hours childcare from Summer Term 2020 please go online and check [childcarechoices.gov.uk](https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk) and do an online eligibility check. If you are eligible; you will be given an 11 digit code with valid from and to dates. If this applies to you and you want 30 hours as of Summer 2021 please let a member of the office staff know ASAP.

To all parents who currently have 30 hour codes; **please ensure that your code is valid and you regularly re-confirm it.** Any breaks in the code validity over any period of the term, will pull into question your child's eligibility for the 30 hours childcare.