

18<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents & Carers,

Our return to school following the Christmas break has clearly been very different to how we had planned it. Thank you for all your continued support following the sudden decision for schools to close to most children.

As indicated in my last letters, we have now switched to our remote learning plan and we have been so impressed by the effort the children are giving. Our staff have been busy making phone calls to children and parents, offering specific and tailored support for learning, and visiting homes to deliver additional resources as needed. This will continue throughout the lockdown. We aim to provide a mix of learning, not all digital based, and where possible with the expectation of children maintaining their written skills in addition to keyboard-based work. In line with national guidance and recent OFSTED recommendations, our aim is to balance the need for engagement in learning with the positive mental health of children and ensuring that learning remains creative and where appropriate fun.

Staff are using a range of videos, live chats, messaging and emails, phone calls and with older children live links, to remain present in children's daily learning. In addition to this we are retaining our weekly Star Award Assembly, providing children with an opportunity to see their teachers collectively talking about their great efforts during the week – this has always been a great motivational event for children and we hope that you enjoy the virtual version that we will be sending a link to. Please share this with your children if possible. We will continue to use Facebook and email as a tool to share this link. If you missed seeing this, here's a link to last week's assembly: <https://youtu.be/VR9-UkLI38>

### **Starbeck Curriculum Stars**

As part of our process of curriculum review we will be launching a new additional layer to our school-wide offer, called Starbeck Curriculum Stars. We had planned for this to be fully launched in January however we will now postpone until school fully re-opens. This links to our promise that outdoor education is an integral part of learning in all year groups and that wellbeing and positive mental health are key within our curriculum offer. Our Starbeck curriculum stars provide every year group with valuable and fun real-life experiences throughout their time at our school to complement and enhance our curriculum. Children will experience a different Star each half term throughout their time at Starbeck Primary and these will often take place during an 'experience day' or as part of an educational visit. Many of the activities, such as fossil hunting or studying wild animals, link or can be linked to topics or subjects within the year group however some will be activities which children may otherwise not get to experience, such as 'den building', and we feel provide opportunities to develop social and emotional skills. To see our full list of star activities, visit the Curriculum page of our website or follow the link below and choose the Curriculum Stars link on the lower right side of the page:

Link <https://www.starbeckprimaryacademy.co.uk/our-school/curriculum/>

### **Building and Site Condition Improvements**

We are delighted to have had approval by trustees for some key capital spending projects. Over the coming months and into the summer following approval of quotes, the following projects will be actioned.

- Re-surfacing of the main playground
- Replacement of the existing door security system in all buildings.
- Extension of wireless connectivity for the KS1 and Nursery building
- Internal re-decoration and structural work in the KS1 building



In addition to this, we are hoping to gain approval for the windows in the KS1 building and Staff Room to be replaced with double-glazed windows as we already have in the KS2 building – this is a vital project going forward and one which will be looked at closely later this term by trustees.

### **Wellbeing @ Starbeck**

Since returning to school in September, we have continued to review our offer for Wellbeing and Mental Health to ensure that all aspect of teaching, personal development and Covid-19 related adjustments have been considered. Our full and current offer is now available on a designated 'Wellbeing & Mental Health at Starbeck' section of our website:

<https://www.starbeckprimaryacademy.co.uk/our-school/wellbeing-mental-health-at-starbeck/>

In addition to this, we undertook a full Wellbeing survey of our children. Responses to this were very positive and where answers did highlight any uncertainties, such as confidence to talk to an adult or sort a problem with a friend, these were addressed through follow-up discussion with a member of staff and where appropriate, actions put in place. We continue to take pupil voice very seriously and gather the thoughts and opinions children in relation to different aspects of school life throughout the academic year.

New to school last term was the introduction of 'Wellbeing Wednesdays' – a weekly school-wide approach of holding class assemblies & activities (indoors or outdoors) focused on specific teaching and learning of the key learning behaviours such as resilience, managing feelings and empathy.

### **SRE**

From September 2020, the government made it **statutory** for all primary age children to be taught ***Relationships and Health Education*** in order to enable children to grow up healthy, happy, safe, and able to manage the challenges and opportunities of modern Britain. The Sex Education strand remains **non-statutory** and parents in Yr 5 & 6 are always informed in advance of any specific aspect related to SE. Due to the school closures in the summer term, schools were given a longer period to ensure the requirements were in place. As part of a high-quality *Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE)* scheme, schools have always aimed to deliver accurate, relevant and age-appropriate information about *Relationships* – one of the three core strands of PSHE and Citizenship (the two other being *Health and Wellbeing* and *Living in the Wider World*). At Starbeck Primary Academy, as in other schools, we have been following the national recommended guidelines for many years – there is therefore little change for us. We have put together a guide for parents and carers, to clarify the statutory requirements of the curriculum as well as a full policy which will be available on our school website shortly.

If your child is attending school please be assured that all previous restrictions and adjustments remain in place in line with national guidance for Covid-19. As you are aware of the new strand of Covid-19 being publicised as even being more contagious, maintaining distance from each other is vital. Please continue to respect each other's safe spaces and if possible, wear a mask to limit the risk as much as we can. Thank you for your support as always.

Yours sincerely

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