



# Highwood Primary School

Promoting Resilience, Achieving Potential.



## Parent Handbook

[www.highwood.herts.sch.uk](http://www.highwood.herts.sch.uk)

# Welcome

I am delighted to welcome you to our school. We are ambitious about every child in our care, and we recognise that it takes an entire community to educate and nurture a child. Our Parents Association, called the Friends of Highwood, the governors and the school team are respectful and work together for the children and their families. We teach all to value different communities, different religions and to understand people's lifestyles and background.

Our aim to raise standards is through promoting a school ethos which is underpinned by a values led approach. These values support the development of the whole child as a reflective learner within a calm, caring, happy and purposeful atmosphere. We strive to develop confident young people who want to learn and achieve their best. Our curriculum inspires and enthuses. This results in emotionally literate, knowledgeable, resilient children who are enthusiastic lifelong learners.

Our vision for Highwood Primary and those that serve is simple:

## **"Promoting Resilience, Achieving Potential"**

Our core values help us to achieve this vision through demonstrating:

## **RESPECT, EMPATHY, GRATITUDE, HONESTY, RESILIENCE**

At Highwood Primary School we implement the Golden Rules as advocated by Jenny Mosley. By working together, we nurture every child to leave our school being the best possible version of themselves.

- Do be gentle, don't hurt anyone.
- Do be kind and helpful, don't hurt anyone's feelings.
- Do be honest, don't cover up the truth.
- Do work hard, don't waste time.
- Do look after property, don't waste or damage things.
- Do listen to others, don't interrupt.

On behalf of the school team, we look forward to meeting you and your family.

**Bindu Rai**

*Headteacher*

The aim and purpose of what we do at Highwood Primary School is to strive to develop confident young people, who want to learn and achieve their best. Our vision for Highwood Primary and those that serve is simple: **“Promoting Resilience, Achieving Potential”**.

We want to impart the following five core values to the children of Highwood Primary School through our curriculum and are promoted through our Golden Rules. By working together, we nurture every child to leave our school being the best possible version of themselves.

**Respect**  
**Empathy**  
**Gratitude**  
**Honesty**  
**Resilience**

We have created a curriculum which is designed to meet the needs of all our children. Our curriculum inspires and enthuses and as a result our vision is for our pupils to be emotionally literate, knowledgeable, resilient children, who are enthusiastic lifelong learners. We develop habits of promoting curiosity, independence of thought, reflective learning so that pupils learn to question and deepen their knowledge through taught and incidental opportunities.

Our curriculum is broad and balanced and taught in a variety of ways including whole class lessons, collaborative small groups or individually, both in the classroom and outdoors. Progression and continuity are carefully planned for, focusing on key knowledge and skills for each year group in each subject. We recognise that learning is interconnected, and links are made across different subjects to enable our children to build their long-term memory overtime.

We fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum, as well as providing additional enrichment experiences and extra-curricular opportunities for our pupils. Our units of work for science and foundation subjects begin with a big question or a big piece, to enable our children to broaden their understanding of the world they live in.

# Daily Routines

## Term Dates

Our term dates are regularly updated on our school website:

<https://highwood.herts.sch.uk/news-dates/term-dates/>

## School Hours

It is very important that your child arrives on time and is collected on time.

The school day begins at 8:50am, however, classrooms are open from 8:45am. Between 8:45 and 9:00am there are specific tasks for the children to complete which will support their learning. Children are then settled and ready to start their day. If your child arrives after 9:00am he/she will be marked late. It is important that your child register at the school office if they are late, to ensure they receive their attendance mark and that their school dinner option is recorded.

Year Group	Classrooms Opening Time	End of School Day
Nursery full time	8:45am	3:15pm
Nursery half day	8:45am or 12:15pm	3:15pm
Reception	8:45am	3:15pm
Years 1 and Year 2	8:45am	3:20pm
Years 3, 4, 5 and 6	8:45am	3:25pm

## Attendance and Punctuality

We expect every child to attend school regularly. While we understand that at times your child may be ill, we ask that you avoid arranging medical appointments in school time if at all possible. Your child should have attendance of 97% or above to give them the best chance of making excellent progress. School attendance is regularly monitored, and you will be contacted if concerns arise. Good attendance is vital for your child to make good progress in their learning and for them to form and maintain positive social relationships in school.

### If your child is ill

If your child is unwell and unable to attend school for any reason, please advise any symptoms being experienced by email ([absence@highwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:absence@highwood.herts.sch.uk)) or phone (01923 256210) **before 9:00am**. If we have not heard from you by 9:30am, we will check the reason for their absence by text or phone. If we receive no reason for an absence, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised on your child's educational attendance record.

**Children who have vomited and/or had diarrhoea should not return to school until 48 hours after their last episode.**

# Daily Routines

## Late for school

Arriving late for the start of the school day can be very distressing for a child and disruptive to the whole class. Parents are asked to make every effort to ensure their child is in school on time, ready to learn. Lateness and poor attendance are monitored regularly by the Attendance Improvement Officer from Hertfordshire County Council.

Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, further action will be taken. We will require you to attend a meeting to discuss how best we can support you. If persistent lateness continues, Hertfordshire County Council can issue a Fixed Penalty Notice if a child is late, after the registers close, for 10 sessions or more over two consecutive half terms.

## Holidays in Term Time

We strongly discourage parents from taking their children on holiday in term time. To ensure that your child's progress is not affected, Fixed Penalty Notices will be applied for when a child has fifteen or more unauthorised sessions (this equates to seven and a half days).

Not taking children out of school for holidays emphasises, in the eyes and understanding of your child, the importance you attach to their time in school.

## Breakfast and Tea Time Clubs

These wraparound care clubs take place in our school dining hall and are run by school staff.

Breakfast Club begins at 8:00am – children should enter the school via the main entrance.

Tea Time Club and runs from the end of your child's school day until 6:00pm.

### Costs

Breakfast Club £4.00 per session

Tea Time Club £12.00 per session

Subject to availability, places are offered to children in receipt of benefit-related free school meals) at half price.

Booking forms for regular spaces at either club can be obtained from the office. Ad hoc bookings can requested by email to [admin@highwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@highwood.herts.sch.uk). The school office is closed from 4:00pm Monday to Fridays. Should you need to contact the Tea Time Club staff in an emergency, their contact number is 07563 820045.

## Extra-Curricular Clubs

We currently have lots of extra-curricular clubs at Highwood run by outside agencies. Example of these clubs include Football, Dance, Taekwon Do and Art Club.

## School Lunch

At lunchtimes the children are supervised and cared for by our midday supervisory assistants (MSAs) and teaching assistants. Children may have a school meal or packed lunch.

Since September 2014, all Early Years and Key Stage 1 children are entitled to free school meals as part of the government's Universal Free School Meals initiative. Free school meals are also available for some of those on Universal Credit. Please do apply for them if you are entitled, even if your child would prefer a packed lunch. The school receives funding for each child who is eligible and eligibility reduces the cost to you for school trips and our wraparound care clubs.

More information is available from the school office, or you can call 0300 123 4048. Alternatively, you can apply online at [Herts County Council - free school meals](#)

**Meals must be paid for in advance on the first day of the school week** (usually a Monday). Meals should be booked and paid for on the School Gateway app/website.

## School Gateway

Our school is cashless. All payments should be made on School Gateway on the smartphone app or via their website. You will also be able to view school dinner money balances and top them up at any time.

## Parking

To ensure the safety of our children at the beginning and end of the school day, parents must not drive into the school car park unless they are collecting a sick child. If there are extenuating circumstances such as a disability or illness, permission to use the car park must be requested from the Headteacher. There are parking restrictions outside the school and we understand that parking in the local vicinity is very difficult. Please be considerate to our neighbours.

# Medication and School Uniform

## Medicines

DfE guidelines recommend that we do not administer medicines to children unless they have a chronic or life threatening condition. Should your child require medicine during school hours, you are welcome to come and administer it in school, however, it is worth asking your GP if he can prescribe medicine that does not need to be taken during school hours. If your child needs to take long term prescribed medication, please speak to the School Office staff to complete the relevant forms.

Asthma inhalers are kept in the classroom and parents and/or carers are requested to complete a MED1 medication form to permit staff to administer the inhaler if required. Should a child need auto-injectors in school for an allergy, parents and/or carers must provide the school with the Allergy Action Plan received from the child's consultant. It is the parents' or carers' responsibility to ensure the relevant forms are completed and for ensuring that all medicines are in date.

## School Uniform

At Highwood Primary School, we believe that the wearing of school uniform provides pupils with a sense of pride in their school and promotes a feeling of community and belonging.

**All clothing must be named.**

You can order uniform online for delivery to your home at:

<https://www.mapac.com/education/parents/uniform/highwoodprimaryschoolWD23>

### Our school uniform:



# Daily Routines

- Sweatshirt, cardigan, or fleece in royal blue with school motif.
- Polo shirt – white or royal blue.
- Trousers, skirt, or tailored shorts – grey or black.
- Socks – plain grey, black or white.
- Shoes – black – **NO trainers please**
- Hijabs should be of plain colour in royal blue, black, white or grey.

## For the summer you can choose for your child to wear:

- Smart black or grey shorts
- Blue and white checked dress
- Highwood blue or plain black cap (outside)

## Personal Belongings

No valuables should be brought into school. Money should not be brought in unless it is for a specific purpose e.g. charity fundraising day. Jewellery must not be worn as it constitutes a Health and Safety risk. Highwood Primary School cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to personal property.

Jewellery of any kind, earrings, nose piercings and nail varnish are not permitted in school. It is a health and safety risk, not only in the playground and during P.E. lessons, but also in a wide variety of other activities. The school is not responsible for its security.

**Stud earrings are acceptable if your child is able to remove them for P.E. lessons.**

# P.E. Kit

## P.E. Kit

All children must come to school in their P.E kits on the days they have P.E.



- P.E. T-shirt should be in house colour.
- P.E. jumpers – plain grey or black (can be purchased from MAPAC).
- P.E. shorts or tracksuit bottoms – plain grey or black.
- P.E. trainers – plain black or white.

**All P.E. kit should be marked with your child's name.**

## Hair

Inappropriate haircuts (e.g. shaven designs, spiked up, gelled hair) are not permitted.

Long hair (boys and girls) **MUST** be tied back.

# Pastoral Care

## Keeping Our Children Safe

At Highwood Primary School, the safety and wellbeing of all of our children is our highest priority. In order to do this, a wide range of measures are put in place:

- All staff appointed to work in our school have a criminal records search completed called a DBS check.
- The statutory number of staff receive regular First Aid training and there are a number of first aid kits in school.
- We have strict procedures for the collection of children. No child will be allowed to leave school with an adult not named on the data collection sheet, or with any young person under the age of 14, unless prior consent is given. The data collection sheet is updated annually or on request.
- If a child's attendance or punctuality causes concern, the school may work closely with the Local Authority's attendance improvement officer (AIO).
- We have designated Child Protection/Safeguarding staff as well as a detailed Child Protection Policy, which is reviewed annually and is available to view on our website. Our Designated Senior Safeguarding lead is Mrs Bindu Rai, Headteacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Miss Lynda Marriott, Assistant Headteacher, Miss Zahidah Dodwell, Welfare DDSP Manager and Mrs Sarah Kenny, Inclusion and SENDCo leader.
- All staff and governors have statutory Child Protection/Safeguarding training.
- Children are encouraged to use the internet, but at all times in a safe way. Pupils are never left unattended whilst online.
- We have high expectations for good behaviour. Our Behaviour Policy shows our strong emphasis on positive approaches, but also our clear boundaries in responding to behaviour choices that threaten the learning, wellbeing or safety of others.
- We do not tolerate bullying in our school community, and as soon as we are aware of an issue we act promptly and effectively.
- We have a clear Whistleblowing policy and if members of staff have any concerns about people working within the school, paid or unpaid, they have a professional duty to inform the headteacher or governing body accordingly.
- Our Health and Safety policy is reviewed annually and is available to view on our website.

# Pastoral Care

## Children's mental health and well-being

At Highwood Primary we recognise the importance of enabling pupils to be resilient and supporting good mental health and well-being.

Difficulties are a part of life and sadly, many children face significant life events that can affect their emotional wellbeing. We feel it is important to acknowledge and empower children to understand their emotions whether they are positive or negative.

We aim to develop their coping skills and to support them when they face challenges, enabling them to grow into healthy, well-rounded young people.

We are committed to doing everything we can to support the positive mental health of all our community, be it pupils, parents, carers or staff.

To support the emotional well-being needs of our school, we are fortunate to have educators that can offer pastoral care to any child when needed. They are available to work in partnership with families and provide support to help manage times of change or difficulty.

## Praise and Rewards

Rewards are offered after a child has shown pro-social behaviour, completed good work or made a good effort. We encourage all our children to behave well and have positive attitudes to learning and celebrate these in a variety of ways.

- Praise from adults and peers by giving positive feedback for achievement and effort.
- Individual or class dojo points.
- Visit to other teachers/Senior Leadership Team.
- Celebration Assembly.
- Stickers/stamps are awarded to children either for consistent good work or behaviour, or to acknowledge outstanding effort or acts of kindness in school.
- By using stamps to highlight good effort or attainment.
- Top Table award at lunchtime for displaying some of our Golden Rules.
- Golden Peg award for looking after our school environment.
- Letters or phone calls home to parents.
- Special responsibilities/privileges.

## Celebration Assembly

Every week children from each class are chosen by their class teacher to receive a Headteacher's Certificate or Reading Certificate. Certificates are presented in a whole school assembly.

# Pastoral Care

## Behaviour

Enjoying school and doing well in learning is an important factor for the healthy development of children. Some children find the structure and demands of school life challenging, and this can be worrying and upsetting at times. We believe that a strong partnership between the school, children and parents is crucial in promoting good behaviour and a positive culture for learning. Our school ethos guides and supports our pupils in a positive way as they develop and grow to be good citizens.

## Anti-Bullying

Highwood Primary School believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. Every year we participate in Anti-Bullying week and Safer Internet day. During their time at our school, all pupils are encouraged to become self-aware about their behaviour and when dealing with others. As a result, pupils will have an improved understanding of themselves leading to their personal growth.

## Pupil Premium Grant

The Pupil Premium Grant is an allocation of additional funding from the government to support specific groups of children aged 4 and over, in year groups Reception to Year 6. Schools decide how to use this grant as they are best placed to assess what additional provision should be made for these pupils. The school publishes an annual report on how we use the funding.

If your child is eligible for Pupil Premium (eligible for benefit-related Free School Meals, a CLA (Child Looked After), or has been adopted) then you may also receive additional support with some other school costs such as uniform, swimming lessons and class trips.

# Communication

We strongly believe that parental involvement in a child's education can have a significant effect on pupil achievement. We want to ensure that you are kept informed as much as possible about what's going on in school.

We are here to support you with your child's learning, their wellbeing and their social and emotional needs. We also understand that there will be many moments you wish to share and celebrate with us too. Your child's teacher will be your first point of contact.

## **Contacting the class teacher**

If you have any queries or concerns regarding your child, please speak with their class teacher. However, the end of the day is better for this than first thing in the morning. You can request an appointment via the school office, [admin@highwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@highwood.herts.sch.uk).

## **Contacting a member of the Senior Leadership Team**

If your query or concern cannot be resolved by the class teacher and you would like to request a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, please contact the school office. The school office is open between 8:00am and 4:00pm Monday to Friday. In the unlikely event that the office is unmanned, there is an answerphone for you to leave a message.

Tel: 01923 256210

Email: [admin@highwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@highwood.herts.sch.uk)

## **Methods of Communication**

Newsletter: our school newsletters are dispatched by email. It is vital that we have your current email address.

This will show important dates and events. You can also find our newsletters on the available on the News and Dates section of our website. See link above.

Our website is regularly updated with lots of school information, policies and procedures: <https://highwood.herts.sch.uk>

## **X (formerly known as Twitter)**

Follow us on X (@HighwoodSchool) where we continue to share the excellent learning that happens at Highwood. It will give you a real-time glimpse into your child's school day.

# Parental Involvement

## Friends of Highwood (PTA)

The Friends of Highwood is a voluntary organisation run by the parents of children that attend the school. The sole purpose of the Friends association is to raise funds that can be used by the school to improve amenities and enhance the learning experience of the children.

Every year, the volunteers of Friends raise upwards of £10,000 for the school through the organisation of social activities such as the summer and Christmas Fairs, discos, Secret Santa Shopping Room, Mother's Day and Father's Day Shopping Rooms, dress-down days etc. In addition, Friends raise funds through the organisation of children's Christmas tea towels, cards and gifts etc.

In previous years, this money has been used by the school for the provision of: stage blocks, stage curtains, gazebos, tables and benches, library books, EYFS outdoor area and gardening equipment.

If you are interested in becoming involved with the Friends or would like more information, please email: [friendsofhighwood@highwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:friendsofhighwood@highwood.herts.sch.uk).

## Governors

The school's governors have key roles working in partnership with the Headteacher and Leadership Team to ensure that the school is effective and improving, providing all of its children with the best possible education. The Chair of the Governors or any of the other governors can be contacted by leaving a letter or message at the School Office.

## Parent View

Parent View gives you the chance to tell Ofsted what you think about your child's school, from the quality of teaching to how bullying and poor behaviour is dealt with. The survey can be completed at any time; you don't have to wait until the school is being inspected.

[Welcome to Ofsted Parent View](#) | [Ofsted Parent View](#)

## Home School Agreement

Our code of conduct is adopted by our whole school community and is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all parents and carers are expected to observe. The school will notify parents and carers of this code and the expectations as part of their induction programme for new parents and carers.

The Code of Conduct for Parents and Carers is available on our website:



## Policies

Policies are a guide for both staff and parents as to how the school is run. You can download our most important policies from our policies page on our website:

<https://highwood.herts.sch.uk/parents/policies/>