



The Hendreds Primary School  
Ford Lane  
East Hendred  
Wantage  
Oxfordshire  
OX12 8JX

tel: (01235) 833379

e-mail: office.3250@hendreds.oxon.sch.uk  
Website: www.hendreds.oxon.sch.uk

Headteacher: James Veness

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Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to start by thanking those parents of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 for their quick response to my request in last week's newsletter. Having an idea of our numbers promptly greatly helped us to plan for the beginning of next term.

**Plans for re-opening** Last week, I was only able to offer you an outline of how the school day will be adapted at the beginning of next term. As you can imagine, this has been a week of making plans and writing risk assessments. Our risk assessment has now been approved by the ODST central team. I am now in a position where I am able to give you more detail as to the changes that we will make to ensure that, come June 3, the school environment is as safe as possible for its children, families and staff. I have attached the plans in a separate document. It is **vital** that all parents of children returning to school in June read the '**Plans for a Phased Re-opening of The Hendreds School**' document. Parents of children not returning to school immediately are also advised to read the attached document as this will help them to understand what school might be like if the phased re-opening is extended later next term, as is the government intention.

**Home Learning** We will continue to provide home learning resources for all children not attending school after half term (even if they are in Reception, Year 1 or Year 6). Much of the work being taught in school will be the same as what will be provided to children learning at home.

**Mental Health Awareness Week** This week is Mental Health Awareness Week. I am aware that the continued lockdown places a great strain on the well-being of adults and children alike. It is natural that children are feeling angry, frustrated, upset...with the current situation. When talking to our children, we must acknowledge these feelings and try to provide them with some coping strategies. This week's assembly, released on Teams earlier, gives some practical advice. You might also find the following links useful:

- [Partnership for children – list of resources to support children's wellbeing during lockdown](#)
- [Anna Freud – National Centre for Children and Families – list of self-care activities for young people](#)
- [Young Minds – advice on starting a conversation with your child about how they are feeling](#)
- [ELSA – Emotional Literacy Support Assistant – online mental health resources](#)

Please do get in touch with me if you need support at any time throughout this period.

**End of Term**

I find it hard to believe that this term has already come to an end. In my class catch-ups, we have regularly been discussing the feeling of 'groundhog day'. The children all deserve huge congratulations for their perseverance in their home learning, as do you for continuing to support them. Although you are still restricted in what you are able to go out and do with the children, I hope that, over the next ten days or so, a change is as good as a rest.

A number of people have commented that I have taken my first headship at a challenging time. Whilst that may be the case, it has been made manageable by the warmth and kindness of the Hendreds community. The ODST central team and the governors have provided me with great guidance and support. The staff – in school and working at home – have been simply magnificent. You, the parents, have been kind, understanding and patient. The children, of course, are still making their teachers smile every single day, either in their class catch-ups or with the brilliant work they are producing. All in all, it has been a tremendous whole-community effort – thank you!

Wishing you all a very happy half term

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Veness', written in a cursive style.

Mr. J. Veness