

Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

**THANK  
YOU!**

### Thank You

As we approach the end of the half term, I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to you all for your continued support and for the incredible work you are doing at home to keep your children learning. I know these last few weeks have been more challenging and I appreciate the resilience and determination that is helping to keep the children on track. I am also grateful for your understanding and patience; you will know that we have had many difficult decisions and complex issues to deal with as a school, including delivering full time remote learning, offering support to those in need and providing childcare places. I appreciate the fact that you understand that some children, whose parents are not critical workers, are also with us in school because they have been identified by professionals as being vulnerable; I would like to express my thanks to you for your continued understanding and sensitivity in this matter.

### Return to School

It is our hope that all the children will be able to return fully in March and, like you, we will be following developments closely in the coming days to see when we are given the go ahead to re-open to everyone. I know our teachers, teaching assistants and support staff have desperately missed working together in school and we hope that we are able to work directly with you and the children very soon.

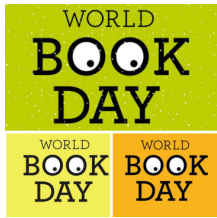
### Half Term Break

I am sure you will be relieved to know that we will all be having a break from remote learning during half term. Our childcare provision will also be closed. The new half term begins on **Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February**; this should have been an INSET day for staff but we will no longer be undertaking this training. This means that for those who access a school place, this will be available on the first Monday back; please complete the form attached to this letter and return it to Mrs Fenlon as soon as possible.

### Covid-19: Contacting the School over Half Term

Schools have been asked to be available to take notifications of positive cases and undertake contact tracing during half term. Parents and carers should report positive cases to school during this period by emailing me at [head.halebank@halton.gov.uk](mailto:head.halebank@halton.gov.uk).

Please note that I have asked our teachers not to respond to emails over half term, so direct any urgent messages to my email address if this is needed. You will be able to contact your child's class teacher using the usual email addresses **from 22<sup>nd</sup> February**.



## Remote Learning.... WORLD BOOK WEEK!

Our teachers are planning a further two weeks of remote learning after half term. We know that after a break, it may take a little time to get used to learning and working again, so staff will be providing a 'lighter' introductory learning day on the first day of the half term: **Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February**. We anticipate that this will be a day where the children will be able to work fairly independently.

On the afternoon of **22<sup>nd</sup> February**, your new work pack will be ready for collection; this will be a little different from the work that has been set so far. We want all the children to re-engage with the process so we will be mixing things up a little. The new timetable will be shorter – only four days – and will be based around the theme of World Book Day (which we are renaming 'World Book Week'). We hope that the activities our teachers are setting will inspire and motivate the children ready for their return to school. Your times for the collection of the work packs is set out below:

Groups	Pupils	Collection Times
Group 1	Pupils with surnames <b>A-E</b>	1.00 – 1.25 pm
Group 2	Pupils with surnames <b>F-K</b>	1.30 – 1.55 pm
Group 3	Pupils with surnames <b>L-R</b>	2.00 – 2.25 pm
Group 4	Pupils with surnames <b>S-Z</b>	2.30 – 2.55 pm

Please follow the school's usual routine for entering the grounds:

- ✓ wear a face covering
- ✓ only one adult collecting
- ✓ observe 2 metre social distancing
- ✓ enter/leave the site as quickly as possible

## Free School Meal (FSM) Vouchers

Halton Borough Council will be using the government's winter support scheme to fund supermarket food vouchers over the February half term. I have ordered these through Wonde and they are scheduled for delivery on Monday; they will arrive in the same way as the weekly vouchers that you have been receiving if your child is eligible for benefit-related Free School Meals (FSM).

## Andrew Curphey has some exciting news...



I am pleased to tell you that our previous lockdown project 'ACTC TV' is back for a one-off half term special! The ACTC team and I will be LIVE on our Facebook Page and YouTube channel on **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February at 6.00 pm**. Just like our 20-episode run from March through to September, the family show will be packed with lots of fun, chat, games and so much more!

The show is free for you, the whole school community and beyond to enjoy! If you would like a shout out during the show, please email [office@actheatrecompany.co.uk](mailto:office@actheatrecompany.co.uk) by Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February.

[www.facebook.com/actheatreco](https://www.facebook.com/actheatreco)

[www.youtube.com/andrewcurphey](https://www.youtube.com/andrewcurphey)

It would be great to see you all get involved, comment and join in the fun and games. You can also catch up on all of our previous episodes on YouTube. Thanks, Andrew



### **Feast of Fun Activity Hampers**

Don't forget to collect your 'Feast of Fun' activity hampers if you requested one of these earlier in the term. Please let us know when you are able to collect your goodies and we will ensure that someone in school is available to see to you when you arrive.

### **Thank You to the Staff**

I would like to end this newsletter by expressing my sincere thanks to the staff team here at Halebank; I am so fortunate to work alongside a team of dedicated professionals who continue to give their all.

Our teachers have worked tirelessly to set up a remote learning programme for the children that is both engaging and accessible to all. The process has involved a very steep learning curve with teachers needing to plan activities weeks in advance, record and upload teaching videos, monitor work and provide feedback, AND respond to pupils and parents. Our teachers, who are now becoming professional YouTubers, have amassed 3,600 views (that's over 270 hours) of their teaching materials!

Equally, our support staff have been thrust into brand new jobs to keep the school-based elements of Halebank running like clockwork, providing supervision and support to those pupils in school, while also ensuring that our families have the resources needed to deliver remote learning. This has regularly involved visits to homes, the delivery of food and laptops and responding to phone calls and emails. I cannot thank everyone enough!

### **Stay Safe 😊**

As you may be aware, there are members of our school community who are now dealing with the virus within their own families and our thoughts and prayers are with them.

I hope you all have a safe and healthy half term.

Yours sincerely

*Richard Harley*

Mr R Harley