



Newsletter 14 06.05.22

Welcome!

Thanks to everyone for your patience, kindness and lovely feedback over the past couple of weeks. It has been a great relief to finally be here and be settling into the new building and making the most of what it has to offer.

What has pleased us the most has been the immediate impact on children's behaviour, positivity and learning. The space, light and design of the building have had an even greater impact than we had hoped for and it has been wonderful to walk around school and see children benefitting from this. The outdoor space is also an enormous improvement. Playtimes are much calmer and children are enjoying exploring new areas and activities outside. The MUGA and the trim trail have created a lot of excitement!



We still have some snagging issues to sort, as you would expect, and we are still working with Newcastle City Council to improve the access to site while work around the site continues. Every day has brought new challenges and solutions and I suspect that my days of being a lollipop lady are not over just yet!

Traffic around and on site

It is great to at last have our own car park and we have a generous amount of parking spaces. The number of spaces will increase soon when the equipment and container are removed and we can paint the new lines at the top of the car park. Drivers have been cautious and followed the one way system as well as the 5mph limit, thank you and please continue to drive and park carefully and with awareness of pedestrians.

We are not yet able to use the planned access to the site for pedestrians coming from the east. When the bridle path is completed and ready for use, there will be a gate from it to the path at the top of the car park. We don't have any control over the timescale of this work and so as an interim measure, Newcastle City Council has installed a temporary path which will allow pedestrians to enter the site before they reach the vehicle entrance. Today was the first morning that we have been able to use this and the entry to site was much safer and easier for pedestrians. Over the next two weeks, this entrance and path will be improved so that it is more permanent and we will add gates to the boundary fence. This new path is from the front of school to the path inside the car park area. If you turn left on the path and you enter the site, you arrive at the first zebra crossing close to the vehicle access. If you turn right, you follow the path around the car park to the second zebra crossing which is beyond most of the traffic. We are therefore encouraging everyone to turn right as this is a much safer route into school. If you are on a bike, we recommend that you dismount and use the path. However, we know that some of you cycle on the road with your children and have been using the vehicle access to the site. If you feel that you and your children can manage this safely, you can continue to enter the site on the road.

We know this seems confusing at the moment but we will get used to it quickly and we will continue to be outside to help you until the path is made more permanent and everyone knows where they are going. Thank you for your patience and support.

Landscaping

You might have spotted that the landscaping is under progress again. Some of the unturfed areas have now been seeded and will soon be grassy if we get some rain! This includes the area between the bike track and the field and some areas in forest school, to the front of the building and the east side. Thank you for respecting these areas and keeping children off them on the way in and out of school.

Y4 Bus

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding after the disappointing start. We are relieved to be able to say that the bus service has run smoothly since then and has arrived on time every day. The Y4 children on the bus are enjoying their independence and arrive with smiles and waves as they enter the site. They have been entering the building via the hall with Mrs Francisco and this has been working well so we will continue with this arrangement. Mrs Gorman is on bus duty next week.

Mr Stout, headteacher at GEMS, has asked me to remind you that parents and carers are not allowed to drive onto the GEMS site at the times which the bus is picking up and dropping off. Please could you park elsewhere and enter the site on foot. Dogs are not allowed anywhere on the GEMS site so please do not take them with you, either on a lead or being carried. Thank you.

Robinwood

Next week is the year 4 residential to Robinwood and there is much excitement in school! Thanks to the parents and carers who came to the meeting on Thursday evening. If you didn't come and you haven't received your information, please let us know and we will get it to you.

The Y4 children can still arrive on the bus on Wednesday morning and there is plenty of space for their bags. If you are bringing your child to school on Wednesday, please come straight to the hall. Mr Burnett or Miss Campbell will be at the hall door to greet you. Children who arrive on the bus will be brought to the hall by Mrs Gorman to join the group. On Friday afternoon, the children are due to return here by 3pm (leaving Alston at 1.30pm) and so should be able to meet you 3.20pm as usual. However, they can go to after school club or can return to GEMS on the bus. If there are unexpected delays to the return to school,

we will contact you as soon as possible. Please let us know if you have previously booked the bus but will not be using it for these journeys.

Dogs on Site Policy at Havannah First

Governors have agreed to a change to our Dogs on Site policy which will allow parents and carers to bring their dogs onto the site **up to the secure line**. This means that dogs can be in the carpark area and the front of school only. Dogs **are not allowed beyond the gates which lead to teaching and play areas**. If you are bringing your dog on site, please follow the following guidance:

- Dogs can only enter site when on a lead.
- Dogs should not be brought on site if it is likely that they will leave any mess.
- Any faeces must be completely removed by the owner and taken off site to be disposed of.
- Owners should be aware that they remain responsible for any damage or harm which their dog might cause.
- Dogs who display anxious behaviour or have previously been aggressive towards other dogs or people should never be brought on site or tethered to a fence off site.
- If you are tethering your dog to the internal fence, please use the fence towards the gate at the far end of the fence, adjacent to the silver sprinkler tank, where there are no passing pedestrians.

Governors will keep this under review and we will let you know if there are any further changes. The school dog, Maggie, is risk assessed, insured and has permission to be on the full school site. Assistance dogs are also allowed on the full site. If you have any questions, please ask. Thank you.

Football Superstars

We are super-proud of the eight girls who represented the school at the football tournament on Thursday after school.

Mrs McMillan and Mrs Gorman were impressed with their drive, hard work and passion. They worked as a team throughout and were incredible ambassadors for sport and Havannah First School. Well done to them all!

We are busy planning other sporting events for the summer term with our schools in the GST and across the city. We will keep everyone up to date.

We will send a dates list next week with dates and times for the remainder of the term. This will include class assemblies and other events which we are planning to resume now that we are able to relax most of our Covid restrictions. I hope that you all have a lovely weekend and I look forward to seeing you all on Monday morning ready for another week.

Best wishes

Helen McKenna

Headteacher



