



Huntington

PRIMARY ACADEMY



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Dear Parents and Carers,

A very warm welcome back to a new academic year! I hope you and your families enjoyed the glorious summer weather and had a wonderful time relaxing together. Our staff team are so excited to welcome all the children back into school and have been busy planning another fantastic year filled with engaging learning and exciting new experiences.

To help us all get off to a smooth, happy start, here are a few key updates and reminders for the school year ahead:

Start and End of the Day

- **Morning Arrival:** Gates open at 8:35am, allowing a smooth flow into the playground. While staff are present on the gate to greet you, please remember that children remain in your care until 8:40am, when classroom doors open. Learning begins promptly at 8:40am, so arriving on time helps every child settle happily into their morning routine.
- **Registers & Lateness:** Gates close at 8:50am, and registers are completed at this exact time across the school to align with new government guidance requiring all registers to be taken simultaneously. Arrivals after 8:50am must enter via the main office and will be recorded as late.
- **Afternoon Collection:** At the end of the day, gates open at 3:05pm and children are released to you at 3:10pm. To ensure everyone stays safe and movement is clear, please avoid blocking the pavement outside school and stand where the teacher can clearly spot you for a safe handover.
- **Collection Adults:** Please remember to keep us updated if there are any changes to who will be collecting your child on any given day.
- **Walking Home (Years 5 & 6):** If your child is in Year 5 or Year 6 and you feel they are ready to walk home independently, please notify their teacher (preferably in writing) at the start of the year or whenever you choose to allow this. We will keep a note on file for the year ahead.
- **Bikes and Scooters:** Please encourage your children to dismount bikes and scooters before entering the school grounds or busy areas and walk into the playground before and after school.

What to Bring to School

- **Healthy Breaktime Snacks:** Children are encouraged to bring a breaktime snack (e.g., fruit, vegetables, cheese, or healthy snack bars—no crisps or chocolate), which should be kept in the classroom separate from their pack-up or bag. Key Stage 1 pupils continue to have access to free fruit every day, and we often have extra available. Please remember that we are a strict **nut-free school** to protect children with severe allergies.

- **Water Bottles:** Please send your child with a reusable plastic or non-metal water bottle filled with water (no metal bottles, fizzy drinks, or hot drinks). Children are encouraged to stay hydrated and can refill their bottles during the day. If your child has a medical need and requires an alternative to water, please pop in to speak with their class teacher.
- **Personal Items & Fidget Toys:** To keep personal belongings safe, we ask that children leave pencil cases, stationery, toys, and personal items at home. Following updated Health and Safety guidance on unregulated items, fidget toys are also not permitted. If a child requires a fidget toy as part of an agreed support plan, the school will provide an approved one. We kindly ask everyone to respect that small adjustments are made in certain cases to support the diverse needs of all our pupils.

Homework Expectations

We strongly believe in balancing school learning with plenty of time at home for family fun, relaxation, and extra-curricular activities, which is why our homework outline is kept simple and focused:

- **Reading at Home:** Reading together is one of the most wonderful ways to nurture your child's learning. We encourage children to read at home at least three times a week. This year, we are placing a larger emphasis on using Reading Records to celebrate reading at home and target children who need extra support. We also have new strategies in school to ensure book changing is regular and enjoyable. Thanks to school investment, the generous fundraising of the Friends of Huntington, and our recent Book Fair, we have purchased a lovely collection of brand-new books for the children!
- **Spellings:** We will no longer be holding weekly spelling tests, as classroom time saved can be used far more effectively for direct teaching in school. You can still see what target spellings your child is learning on Spelling Shed, and information on fun ways to practise at home will be sent out soon.
- **Maths Skills:** Pupils will have access to Numbots (building core maths skills in Key Stage 1) and Times Tables Rock Stars (mastering times tables in Key Stage 2). We will provide logins for both, and encouraging a few minutes of practice at home makes a huge difference. Further information and resources will follow.
- **Year 6:** There are some slight differences in Year 6 to support the children in their final year of school and their journey to secondary school. The teachers will communicate these with the children.

Mobile Phones & Smart Devices

- We recognise mobile devices are an everyday reality and that older pupils travelling to and from school independently may need them.
- **Gate-to-Gate Policy:** We operate a strict 'gate-to-gate' policy. Mobile phones must be turned off and tucked inside a coat pocket or bag before entering the school grounds. On arrival in the classroom, pupils hand their phone directly to their teacher or place it in the agreed class basket. Phones are stored securely in the office throughout the day.
- **Smartwatches & Trackers:** Under Department for Education guidance, smartwatches (capable of messaging, calls, or internet) and tracking devices (recording location, steps, or audio data) are prohibited. The only exceptions are life-saving medical devices or those specifically approved by myself as Headteacher. Any unauthorised devices will be safely held by staff and returned at the end of the day or trip.

Uniform and Appearance Updates

- **School Uniform:** Following our letter sent out in July, plain red polo shirts/t-shirts remain a permanent, practical, and affordable option for both everyday wear and PE. Please don't forget to name every part of your child's uniform.
- **Logos and Branding Guidelines:** Branded items featuring the official school logo are entirely optional, and plain unbranded items in our school colours can be easily and affordably purchased from local supermarkets. Our preference is for plain clothing unless it displays the official school logo. While a very small, discreet manufacturer's logo is acceptable, items with large brand names, slogans, or designs printed across the chest are not permitted. Please see the letter issued in July for any further guidance.

- **Managing Uniform in September:** To keep expectations clear and supportive, any uniform issues will be addressed using a simple two-step approach: class teachers will first give a gentle reminder directly to the child. If the issue persists, a letter will be sent home so we can work together to resolve it.
- **Earrings & PE Safety:** For everyone's safety, no jewellery or earrings may be worn during physical activity or PE lessons, and taping over piercings is strictly prohibited. Children must be able to remove their own earrings; if they cannot, they will be assigned a non-active support role (such as refereeing or scorekeeping) during the lesson, so they remain safely involved.
- **Makeup & False Nails:** Following an increase prior to the summer break, we are updating our policy expectations in line with most schools: makeup and false nails are strictly prohibited for pupil safety and standards.

Behaviour Principles

At Huntington Primary Academy, we foster a positive, caring environment guided by our three core rules: **Be Ready, Be Respectful, and Be Safe**. We hold high expectations for behaviour and work in close partnership with parents to support every child. When children need reminders, staff respond calmly and supportively. Where necessary, fair consequences - such as a few minutes of reflection time during breaktime - are used constructively to help children reflect and make better choices.

Open Classroom / Meet the Teacher

All classrooms will be open after school on Wednesday, 16th September between 3:10pm – 3:30pm. Please pop in to say hello to the class teacher! Your child will love showing you around their new classroom, and it's a great opportunity to meet their teacher and ask any informal questions.

Thank you so much for your ongoing support, partnership, and enthusiasm as we begin this new academic year together.

Warmest regards,

Mrs J Holton

Headteacher