



1st September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE – RETURN TO SCHOOL

Welcome back to the imminent start of the new school year at Richmond Hill! I hope you have all had an enjoyable summer break. We are so excited to have our children returning back to school on Tuesday 5th September and welcoming our new pupils*, we can't wait to see their smiling faces. (*Foundation children have staggered start dates between 5th-11th September)

The start of a new school year brings new beginnings, new friendships, and new learning opportunities. Our dedicated teachers have been hard at work planning engaging lessons and activities to nurture your child's growth and development. We know that the transition back to school and indeed the start of school for our nursery children can be challenging, but please know that our caring staff are here to support your child every step of the way ensuring your child feels comfortable, confident, and excited to learn.

This year we will continue fostering a positive learning environment that encourages curiosity, critical thinking, and creativity. Our children will have many opportunities to take part in interesting hands-on learning, working collaboratively, and gaining skills and knowledge to take them forward. You play a crucial role in your child's education. We look forward to strengthening our partnership with you and working together to help your child thrive. Please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher or any of the leadership team with any questions or concerns.

I would like to take this opportunity to update you on the exciting improvements that have been taking place at our school over the summer through the decarbonisation scheme. The contractors have been working hard to enhance our learning facilities through major building renovations. While the majority of the construction is complete, there are still some areas of the school that require finishing touches over the course of the first half term. Our KS2 children will remain in their modular classrooms for the time being. Please be assured that a full risk assessment has been carried out and safety precautions have been put in place to ensure our children can learn and play safely as this work is being completed. There may be some noise and minor disruptions on certain days, but we will do our best to keep these to a minimum. I appreciate your patience and understanding as we make these important upgrades to provide the best possible environment for all our children. We have waited a long time now and I know the end results are just in sight!

Due to the ongoing building works within school, we would like to inform parents that our Hillbillies, before and after school childcare provision, will be located in the Foundation Stage area, for the first two weeks during w/c 4th and 11th September. Parents will need to drop off and collect any children accessing our Hillbillies provision via the Foundation and KS1 gate, where Hillbillies staff will be there to greet you at the EYFS entrance.



It is expected that this provision will move back to its usual place, located near the dining room/KS2 area, after these two weeks. Any further updates will be communicated to parents.

The office staff will be relocating during w/c 18th September, to allow contractors access to this area, therefore during this week only, face to face contact with the office staff will be limited. We therefore ask that parents do not come to the main office during this week, if at all possible. Parents can of course contact school via the other usual methods of phone call, email (office@richmond.doncaster.sch.uk) and in-app/text message during this time.

I also want to remind you that this term I will be supporting a nearby primary school two days per week. As such, on those days, our Head of School Mrs. Cousins will be Acting Principal at Richmond Hill. As many of you are aware Mrs. Cousins is a highly experienced and capable leader who will ensure everything runs smoothly in my absence. She knows our children and staff very well after many years in our school. I have the utmost confidence our school will remain stable, nurturing, and forward thinking with a focus on achievement for all our children. Please join me in welcoming Mrs. Cousins into her new role and giving her your full support this term.

We have a new staff member joining us this term. Mrs. Adams will be taking over as Deputy Safeguarding Lead and Inclusion Coordinator, succeeding Mrs. Lord in this vital role. Mrs. Adams brings extensive experience working with pupils of all ages and learning needs. I know she will be a wonderful addition to our team. Also Miss Fairclough joins us in Year 4 as our Student Teacher for the year. I also want to recognise Miss Cooper, who after 13 years of dedicated service to our Early Years' and Key Stage 1 pupils, will be leaving us in September. We are tremendously grateful for the care, compassion, and inspiration Miss Cooper has provided to so many children over the years. She will be greatly missed by children and staff alike. Please join me in thanking Miss Cooper for her many years of outstanding contributions to our school.

We are confident that these staffing changes will allow new opportunities for growth and improvement as we start the new term.

Here's a reminder of all the relevant information you need to know, in order for us to have a smooth transition into the new academic year.

Firstly, here is a reminder of start and finish times for each year group:-

FROM SEPTEMBER 2023		
Year Group	School Start time	School Finish time
Reception	8.45am	3.15pm
Year 1	8.40am	3.10pm
Year 2	8.45am	3.15pm
Year 3	8.45am	3.15pm
Year 4	8.40am	3.10pm
Year 5	8.45am	3.15pm
Year 6	8.40am	3.10pm
Nursery	8.35am Wednesdays for 15 hours children only Beginning of Week 8.35am-11.35am End of Week 12.00noon to 3.00pm	3.00pm



Gate Opening/Closing Times

MORNING	Foundation/KS1 Gates open am	Foundation/KS1 Gates close am	KS2 Gates open am	KS2 Gates close am
	8.30am	8.45am	8.30am	8.45am
AFTERNOON	Foundation/KS1 Gates open pm	Foundation/KS1 Gates close pm	KS2 Gates open pm	KS2 Gates close pm
	2.55pm	3.20pm	3.05pm	3.20pm
Nursery 15hrs Wednesday only	For Nursery 15 hours children on Wednesdays only Beginning of Week children being collected following their half day morning session - Gates open at 11.25am and close at 11.35am End of Week children being dropped off for their half day afternoon session - Gates open at 11.55am and close at 12.00 noon			

Entry/Exit to School:

Parents of Y1/Y2 and Foundation children - for safeguarding reasons you MUST accompany your child to their classroom in the morning and stay with them in the KS1 yard until the classroom door is open and staff are available, so please do not leave them at the gate. Please see below for arrangements for Y3/Y4 and Y5/Y6 pupils.

Beginning of the Day - gates to Foundation/KS1 and KS2 will open at 8:30am. Classrooms will open 5 minutes before the allocated start time.

End of the Day - gates to Foundation/KS1 will open at 2.55pm and KS2 gates at 3.05pm.

Entry and Exit are our busiest times and initially this will take longer as staff become familiar with new parents/carers. As we have seen previously this will speed up and we thank you in advance for your patience.

KS2 Gate - Pupils are able to filter in to the KS2 playground at their allocated start time from the bottom of the ramp. Staff will be on duty daily to greet pupils and to direct them to line up at their year group designated area/cone. On exit, pupils who are being collected will line up at the designated year group areas on the playground to be collected by a parent/carers and released by the staff member.

Pupils in Y3 and Y4: must be accompanied to/from school by an adult and brought to the KS2 gate. On entry parents/carers can either bring their child to the gate and a staff member will guide pupils to their designated area or parents/carers may accompany them up into the playground. On exit parents/carers must enter the site and go to the designated year group area to collect their child from the staff member.

Pupils in Y5 and Y6 only: are able to walk to school and home from school alone with parental consent – please see the website for our policy – parents will be able to provide their consent if they wish their child to walk to/from school alone on the Arbor Parent Portal from the afternoon of Friday 1st September. Alternatively - on entry parents/carers can either bring their child to the gate and staff will guide them to their designated area or parents/carers may accompany their child up into the playground and on exit parents/carers may enter the site and go to the designated year group area to collect their child from the staff member.



Safeguarding:

At Richmond Hill, we are committed to safeguarding our children. All of our staff receive regular updates and training and there will always be someone available for your child to talk to if they're worried. Should you have any concerns about a child, no matter how small they seem, don't hesitate to make contact with the Safeguarding Team in school. Please see our website on how you can contact the team both during and outside of school opening hours.

Parental Permissions/Consents:

The annual consents/permissions for your child will be available via your Arbor Parent Portal from the afternoon of Friday 1st September. Parents new to school will be sent details about how to access the Arbor Parent Portal shortly. Please ensure you access and complete the necessary consents for the following as soon as possible:-

Photographs/Videos – all pupils

In particular, we would love to share photographs of our pupils as soon as they start their new school year, so if you agree to this please complete your permissions straight away to enable us to let you see how they are settling into their new classes and meeting up with their friends or for our new children taking their first steps in forming the friendships that may last a lifetime.

Home/School Agreement – all pupils

Swimming (Y5 only)

Mobile Phones (Y5/Y6 only)

Walk Home Alone (Y5/Y6 only)

Collection of Children at the end of the day:

The details of any/all adults, including grandparents/childminders etc, collecting your child at the end of the school day, should be included in their Arbor Pupil Profile as 'authorised to collect'. Please check your Arbor Parent Portal to make any necessary amendments.

If you make arrangements for your child to be collected at the end of the day by a different adult who is not authorised to collect from school, then please be aware that you will need to ensure that you have informed either the classroom staff directly or a member of the academy office staff, to let us know the details. If we do not receive this confirmation then this will mean a delay in your child leaving school until we make contact with you to check it has your authorisation.

Lunch Arrangements/School Meal Bookings before the return to school in September:

For those children who would like a school provided meal, parents are able to view the meal choices on ParentPay – either the meal of the day or a jacket potato. Please ensure you complete your meal bookings on ParentPay **as soon as possible ready for the start of term**. Please note **if you experience any difficulty in booking meals via ParentPay** before our return to school, do not worry as we will ensure a manual check is carried out at morning registration during the first week.

Please ensure your child remains on their **primary meal choice every day** - school dinners **OR** packed lunches. The only exception to this is Friday's choice as we recognise that some children do not include fish in their usual diet.

Packed Lunches

For children who prefer to bring a packed lunch to school please remember not to include nuts/nut products, for example chocolate sandwich spread, and also no glass bottles.

Pupils new to Year 3 from September – please remember Universal Free School Meal eligibility ended in Y2, so unless your child is eligible for Doncaster Council Free School Meals, payment will need to be made.

Pupils new to school - access to ParentPay will only be possible once your child is formally admitted to school (details to follow from our finance team) and academy office staff will manually book your child's meal preference in the interim during morning registration.



School Meal Bookings (general information)

Our School Meals are provided by an external provider – Doncaster Schools’ Catering. Meal bookings should be made via ParentPay at least a week in advance. This includes both meals to be paid for and also for children eligible for free school meals. Free school meals are allocated either from:-

- Doncaster Council due to parents’ individual circumstances - parents apply directly to Doncaster Council via the following link:-
<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/doitonline/free-school-meals>
- **OR** all our Reception/Y1/Y2 children are eligible for UFSM (universal free school meals) from the Government regardless of financial circumstances. Meal bookings for Reception/Y1/Y2 and any individual pupils eligible for Doncaster FSM will show as no cost – but you still need to select your child’s meal choice on ParentPay.
- Nursery children are not eligible for UFSM.

Please note it is possible to make meal bookings for up to 3 weeks at a time.

If parents do not book their child’s school meals on time, this results in difficulties for the service. We try to avoid any inconvenience to parents, but if meal bookings are not completed on time and you have not provided your child with a packed lunch, you will be contacted shortly after morning registration to bring a packed lunch into school.

Our Children’s Safety:

For the safety of those pupils in school who have severe allergies, could we please remind parents that packed lunches from home should not contain nuts or nut products e.g. chocolate spread sandwiches. Our school is also designated a Healthy School. Morning break times – Foundation/KS1 pupils have free fruit provided from Doncaster Council’s fruit in schools’ scheme, KS2 pupils can bring their own healthy snack, **this must only be a piece of fruit or a cereal bar which should not contain nuts/nut products**. A drink of water will be provided by school for all pupils either on school dinners or packed lunches. Pure fruit juice (not squash) can be included in packed lunches as part of your child’s 5-a-day.

As part of our risk assessment, for the health and safety of all our children, dogs, even if they are carried, are not allowed on school premises and should not be brought through the main school gates at both the KS1 and KS2 entrances.

Bikes and Scooters are not allowed on school premises – children/adults should dismount at the outer school gates.

Road Safety and Parking:

The staggered start and finish times have up to now eased the parking problem around school and we have received far fewer complaints from local residents. However courteous parking is essential to help to keep community relations positive. Please respect local residents’ property and their access to their own driveways as well as parking sensibly in the areas immediately outside school - please do not park on the kerb too close to the crossing near the KS2 gate as well as on the yellow zig zag lines near the KS1 gate. As our children and parents need to line up outside the school gates and are adjacent to vehicles parking in the lay-bys, may we please ask for your support by keeping engines turned off when parked to avoid anyone inhaling damaging vehicle fumes.

We would also like to remind you that the academy car park is not for general use by parents.

Our gates are locked at certain times during the day to ensure the health and safety of the children and parents walking past the gates. They will be locked at the beginning and end of the school day for this reason. We also request that parents do not enter the academy car park either by vehicle or on foot, including when collecting children from After School Clubs/Hillbillies Before and After School Childcare/Teacher-led Tuition Sessions. If you are eligible, and have a need to use our designated disabled parking spaces on a regular basis, please contact a member of the Academy Office Team.



Doncaster Council's Safer Neighbourhood Team no longer provide a Crossing Patrol Service outside our school. Parents should be aware that there is no obligation on the Authority to ensure that there is a daily crossing patrol. There is a Puffin Crossing near the KS2 gate. Children and parents are advised to use the crossing when arriving/leaving school for health and safety reasons.

We also need to stress to parents that children on their way to/from school should avoid attempting to make a detour through the Levett School grounds (next to the KS2 gate). The car park in the grounds can be very busy and we need to keep our children safe. The Levett school also politely ask our parents not to park in their car park, even if the barrier is not in operation, as they have restrictions in place.

To ensure the safety of your children, your co-operation would be greatly appreciated

Bags and Water Bottles:

We ask that PE kits for Reception to Y6 pupils are brought into school every Monday (or Tuesday if it's a bank holiday/training day) and remain in a separate bag in the class cloakrooms until every Friday. We ask that only items necessary for learning are brought in a bag on a daily basis to school - children will be allocated a reading diary (to contain merits, home school reading and any interventions only) and school reading books. Your child does not need to bring their own stationery to school as we provide all necessary equipment.

A reminder that drinks containers should be named and only contain water, there is an opportunity for pupils to refill their bottles with water during the school day.

Pupils in Nursery/Reception/Y1/Y2 will be provided with a free book bag on admittance with replacement bags being available from the Academy Office with the cost to be paid via your ParentPay account. KS2 pupils can bring their own backpack to school.

Richmond Hill School Uniform Code for all pupils including Nursery children:

It is very important all clothing is clearly marked with your child's name

Our uniform builds a sense of pride and belonging so it is important that our school uniform is worn.

To ensure affordability we do not require logo items please see below:-

Black or Grey Trousers or Skirt/Pinafore Dress

Blue Sweatshirt or Blue Cardigan

White Blouse/Shirt or White Polo Shirt

Plain Black Shoes/Plain Black Trainers/Black Sandals (all footwear should be black, flat, sensible and safe)

Summer Dress:-

Summer weight dress in plain blue, blue check or stripes

Blue or grey shorts (should be smart school shorts not the PE type)

PE Kit

Children in Reception to Year 6 (Nursery children do not need a PE kit) should bring their PE kit to school in a named bag every Monday and leave it in the class cloakroom until Friday when it should be taken home.

Black Shorts (not knee length), White t-shirt, Trainers, Tracksuit in inclement weather. The basic premise for PE clothes is health and safety. If PE kit is not brought to school a spare kit may be provided. In order to be flexible because of changes in weather, PE may take place outside or inside, so please ensure you send your child with their full kit as outlined above.

Swimming Lessons – pupils in Year 5 participate in swimming lessons with an outside provider for weekly one hour sessions over 13 weeks.



Earrings/Jewellery:

Earrings and other jewellery (except a simple watch – not smart watches) **are not** to be worn at school as part of health and safety schools' risk assessments.

If ears are newly pierced this should be carried out during the 6 week break to ensure they are able to be taken out when we return to school. However, if a pupil's ears are still healing then inform the academy office by email and please ensure your child's ears are covered with medical tape – e.g microporous paper tape (for health and safety) before arrival to school on a daily basis.

Make-up/nail varnish/nail art/children's temporary tattoos – **must not** be worn in school.

Extremes of hair style/colour are not allowed. Lines/shapes or patterns cut into hair and extreme hair colours are classed as 'extremes'.

School Uniform Bank

St Peter's Church in Bentley operate a School Uniform Bank for pre-loved uniform for parents who have children in any of the schools in the DN5 area. If you have any items you can donate or you would like to request any school uniform items, please contact St Peter's.

The link to submit a request for particular uniform items is shown below:-

<https://form.jotform.com/22281402260033>

Attendance/Absences:

The Government guidance for Working Together to Improve School Attendance outlines key responsibilities by parents, schools, trusts and governing bodies. The new legislation puts emphasis on the importance of regular school attendance.

All pupil absence (including medical appointments) should be communicated by parents direct to the Attendance Officer to the email address – absence@richmond.doncaster.sch.uk or by telephoning school on 01302 782421 and choosing option 1 to leave a voice mail message.

To ensure the information is received by the appropriate staff, please do not use any other school email address. If a pupil is absent and we have not received a reason for absence this **will result in a home visit by a member of our Inclusion Team as part of our legal duties to missing pupils.**

When reporting any absence due to illness, please give as much detail as possible. Some childhood illnesses may affect anyone who is pregnant or children/adults who have other health issues – this will give us the opportunity to advise anyone in these categories to seek further advice from a health care professional.

Further information regarding the expectations for parents, schools, trusts and local governing bodies can be found following this link.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Pupils late at the start of the school day

Attendance and a prompt start is really important and we know you share this by the good attendance Richmond Hill has. Our attendance procedures place emphasis on lateness as well as attendance. Our Attendance and Welfare staff closely monitor pupils arriving late to school. If children are persistently late, parents will be contacted to discuss the best way we can offer support or intervention. Gates will be closed promptly and any children arriving after session start times will need to enter via the main school entrance where they will be registered. At the end of the school day any child not collected by 3.20pm from their usual exit, should be collected from the main school office. This enables the gates to be secured promptly to ensure pupils accessing our after school clubs, teacher-led tuition sessions and Hillbillies (Before and After School Childcare) are safe on site.



Arbor Parent Portal and Arbor App:

Arbor is the school's management information system.

If you are new to school you will be sent details shortly about how to log on to the Arbor Parent Portal. The portal gives you access to the following:-

Your child's dashboard is the first screen that you will see. This gives a quick glance of your child's attendance. You can return to this page at any time by clicking on the school's logo or choosing Dashboard from any menu.

Statistics section shows information about your child's attendance.

Parent of more than one child - If you are the Primary Guardian for more than one child in the school, you can access and view each child through the same portal by clicking on the name at the drop-down menu with the children's names in the top-left of the home page, then change sibling.

Profile – this allows you to see basic information about your child, and highlights any unread notices or actions needed to be completed. You will be able to amend details such as your contact details, medical information, consents – pending approval by school.

Parental Permissions – consents/permissions for photographs/home school agreement etc are available on an annual basis to confirm.

Parents' Evening appointments – details of dates will be communicated when available and parents may book appointments with their child's class teacher.

Academy Office:

The academy office is open from 8.15am-4.30pm Mondays-Thursdays and 8.15am-3.45pm Fridays.

Academy office staff will also be on duty at the KS1 gate/main entrance daily at the beginning/end of the school day for any parental advice/queries. You can also communicate with the academy office staff via office@richmond.doncaster.sch.uk.

School Website:

Richmond Hill Primary Academy's website is – www.richmond.doncaster.sch.uk

You can find lots of useful information on our website including details about school uniform, policies etc. Under Parents' Information you will find copies of all current/previous letters to parents (these are always emailed to parents but just in case you can't find something), as well as term dates, forms etc. Under the Classes and Home Learning tab you can select your child's class page. Here you will find useful information from your child's class teacher together with class videos/photographs. You do not need a password for this main page.

Snacks:

A healthy snack can be brought from home for morning break times by children in Key Stage 2 only – **this should only be a piece of fruit or a cereal bar – and should not contain any nuts/nut products**. Free fruit from Doncaster Council will continue to be available for KS1 and Foundation children.

Milk:

If you would like your child to have milk in school please register with the provider Cool Milk. Details are available on the school's website. Milk is free up to the age of 5, but you will still need to register.



Year 5/Year 6 Pupils Only – Mobile Phones/Walk Home Alone:

Parents of pupils in Year 5/Year 6 may give their consent via the Arbor Parent Portal for their child to walk home alone. Mobile phones should not be brought into school by pupils. However, if parents of Y5/Y6 pupils feel that their child needs the use of one before and after school because they walk to/from school alone, then parental permission is needed via the Arbor Parent Portal. Pupils should deposit their phone on arrival to their classroom with their class teacher. Phones are then securely stored in the Academy Office during the school day and returned to pupils at the end of the day in their classrooms. Phones brought to school must not be kept by pupils in their bags/pockets.

Communications:

Please ensure you keep your contact details up to date via the Arbor Parent Portal

We recognise how important the communication between school and parents/carers is and that is why we regularly keep you informed by sending messages/letters by text and email via our **Arbor** management information system.

We will continue to send **email** communications via Arbor, which has proven to be a very successful method, and would urge parents to check their email accounts on a regular basis for any whole school communications or information from your child's year group. The majority of parents also find a quick and easy way of communicating with school is by sending us an email to office@richmond.doncaster.sch.uk this account is checked regularly throughout the school day.

You can also contact your child's class teacher direct by emailing the year group e.g – year6@richmond.doncaster.sch.uk although responses from teaching staff will be at the end of a school day.

However, the cost of sending **text messages** has drastically increased, so we will only send messages by text to parents/carers for urgent or time sensitive communications.

The **Arbor In-App Messaging** is a facility already included in our management information system so the cost is minimal. Some parents already communicate with school via **Arbor In-app Messages** so we would like to take this opportunity to encourage all parents to access it as we will be using this as an alternative to texts. This enables quick messages:-

- to be sent from school to parents/carers
- and for parents/carers to reply to messages as well as sending school a new message.

You can access **Arbor In-app messages** from the communications section in the **Arbor Parent Portal**. The Arbor Parent Portal is where you can view your child's pupil profile and also book appointments for Parents' Evenings. You can access the Arbor Parent Portal in two ways:-

- Via the **Arbor App** – this is the mobile version of the Arbor Parent Portal, for use on mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. You can download the Arbor App for free from either the Play Store for Android phones or the App Store for IOS. It also enables messages to be received as Push Notifications on your mobile device.
- Via the **Arbor website** - www.arbor-education.com to log on to your Arbor Parent Portal communications.

Class Emails - Year group emails are a great way of communicating with class teachers. Emails are checked once daily at the end of the school day. If you have any queries about daily routine or what your child is learning, then please do not hesitate to get in touch. However, If there is anything urgent please contact a member of staff in the academy office who will be able to act more swiftly.



To contact:-

Year 1 to Year 6 Class Teachers:- please use the class email address - just change the year group for example

Year1@richmond.doncaster.sch.uk

Year 2@richmond.doncaster.sch.uk etc

For Foundation classes

Nursery@richmond.doncaster.sch.uk

Reception@richmond.doncaster.sch.uk

For general parental enquiries/contacting the Academy Office Team

office@richmond.doncaster.sch.uk

For absences or to report any medical appointments

absence@richmond.doncaster.sch.uk or phone 01302 782421 and leave a voicemail

For confidential contact

pa@richmond.doncaster.sch.uk

The following information is for any parent who has a child eligible for a school nursery place starting in September 2024

Nursery Applications 2024/2025

Apply now to Doncaster Council for Nursery places for September 2024 to July 2025. Deadline 2nd October 2023. Please go to Doncaster Council Admissions to complete your application form (child's date of birth 1/9/2020 to 31/8/2021).

Please note:- Early admission to nursery - parents must secure a September 2024 place before any possible offers of January/April starts are made.

Let's make this school year one of growth, achievement, and celebration. Welcome back!

Yours sincerely



Debbie Secker
Principal

