



Mousehold Infant and Nursery School Mousehold Avenue Norwich NR3 4RS
01603 427012 officemousehold@istnorfolk.co.uk www.mouseholdinfants.com

24th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been great getting to know more of you when I've been on the playground before and after school. I am always happy to talk to you and if you have any questions I'll try and answer them for you. I have noticed how settled the children are when coming into school. The children who found this difficult at the start of term have really grown in confidence and have done a brilliant job in separating from parents and carers.

I would like to share with you our High Five:

Our 'High Five' is the golden thread that underpins our Curriculum:

Respect Help Learn Enjoy Achieve

Children leave Mousehold as successful learners who:

are **critical thinkers**, with **enquiring minds** who can adapt to the ever-changing world around them. (**Respect**)

can **understand, cooperate** and shape the world together. (**Help**)

are **motivated** and **passionate** about life-long learning. (**Learn**)

are **happy** and **confident** to succeed in modern British society. (**Enjoy**)

are **resilient**, with a growth mindset to carry on achieving. (**Achieve**)

Your children will come home with a **High Five letter** when we have seen them to do something special, related to the High Five at school or when we hear about it from parents and carers. They stand up in a Friday assembly and the whole schools celebrates their achievement. Please do share your children's achievements with us.

Headteacher: Mrs Rebecca Westall Deputy Headteacher: Mr Ian Tolson
Designated safeguarding leads: Mrs Westall, Mr Tolson, Miss Wood. Miss Balachandre



Before and after school arrangements:

One way system:

We have a one- way system with an 'in' and an 'out' gate when you come onto and leave the playground. This is to ensure that children and adults enter and leave school in a safe way.

Playground equipment:

The children enjoy the play equipment on a rota basis at lunchtimes and playtimes and at other times of the day. Please can you ensure your children don't use this before and after school as it is not supervised by school staff.

Safeguarding and Support

Just One Norfolk

This website is excellent in supporting families and is the go to health website for Norfolk families. It covers all aspects of physical and mental health. The number to ring for support and advice is: **0300 300 0123**

<https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/>

Please remember to look at our website to remind you of how safeguarding is always the main priority at Mousehold.

<https://www.mouseholdinfants.com/safeguarding/>

Designated Safeguarding Leads

Mrs Westall, Mr Tolson, Miss Wood, Miss Balachandre

These members of staff monitor and manage all safeguarding practices and ensure staff are supported and have the training they need. Please ask to see one of these adults if you are worried about the safety of a child at school.

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child out of school hours then the number to ring is:

CADS – Children's Advice and Duty Service - 0344 800 8020.

A Message from our Mental Health Champions

Mrs Abeyta, Mrs Graham and Mrs Desouky

Cultivating an Attitude of Gratitude...

Free Apps and Resources to Help with Wellbeing and Mental Health...

We trust this article finds you well, and you are beginning to adjust to having your children back at school in new classes. On Tuesday 21st September it was National Gratitude day. Gratitude can make us **feel happier, healthier and more optimistic**– If you can get into the habit of acknowledging all the good things you have, the chances are you will feel happier about your life and hopeful for the future. it can start with the little things.

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- Gratitude opens the door to more relationships. ...
- Gratitude improves physical health. ...
- Gratitude improves psychological health. ...
- Gratitude enhances empathy and reduces aggression. ...
- Grateful people sleep better. ...
- Gratitude improves self-esteem. (Amy Morin, 23rd Nov 2014)

Many of us like to read and there are certainly lots of good resources on mental health available. If you join the library these resources can be borrowed for free! We have some amazing libraries in Norwich. Why not try out our main city Library inside the Forum or some of the local libraries like Sprowston (Recreation Ground Road, NR7 8EW) or Plumstead library (Plumstead Road, NR1 4JS). If there is a specific book you would like, that you may have seen or someone has recommended the library also offers a service where titles can be ordered online so you can collect and borrow. <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/libraries-local-history-and-archives/libraries>

If books are not your thing, then there are some great APPs out there to use for wellbeing. These are generally free of charge. The NHS has a link to some that they recommend. <https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mental-health/>

My Black dog is a website that we've recently come across that has a focus on anxiety and depression. This online charity's main aim, is to help connect people through webchat with others who themselves have experienced mental health issues. <https://www.myblackdog.co/mental-health-charity>

Lots of food for thought...Have a great weekend, please don't hesitate to contact us if we can help in any way.

World Mental Health Day

Sunday the 10th of October is World Mental Health day. We would like to invite all the children to celebrate wellbeing with us and come to school in non-uniform on **Friday 8th October**. We are raising funds to develop our wellbeing space and resources in school, any donations towards this will be gratefully received on the day.

Leading Through the Pandemic – continued from last week....
Rebecca Westall – Headteacher of Mousehold Infant and Nursery School
August 2021

The parent and carer community were incredibly supportive of school leaders and were very kind with e mails and positive communication regarding the care we were providing for the children at home and school. Some of our more vulnerable families went out of their way to support other families, sharing what little they had in food, clothes and finances. Our school Facebook page, launched just after the initial school closure was a lifeline for many families. It was heartwarming to see photos of children and staff making the

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most of a worrying situation. It helped connect us all. The school Facebook page continues to be an excellent way of connecting the school community.

Expectations were high of teachers and their ability to provide remote learning to all pupils not attending school at a moment's notice. This steep learning curve was one that could not build upon previous times as there were no previous times like this. Usually a school leader researches new ways of working and trials it before expecting all staff to come on board. This couldn't happen. Again, the tight team of teachers managed this incredibly well and with professionalism; constantly refining their practice. It was such a steep learning curve. Staff were on a rota to support children who were in school and several also helped deliver food hampers to vulnerable families. Staff were all working incredibly hard to keep the school going and give the families and staff the support they needed. Senior leaders were coordinating different roles and taking responsibility for provision, education and safeguarding daily.

The overwhelming feeling as a leader was one of uncertainty with each week bringing something new to focus on, plan and sensitively communicate to the school community, not knowing what was around the corner and often without much thinking time. The adrenaline and drive to do our best kept us going. Coupled with the uncertainty was a huge sense of achievement. Each step along the way was something to be acknowledged. It was history in the making and we were making a difference.

School leaders have learnt new skills and ways of working and some of them are here to stay. It is easy to become used to working in the same way over several years if it isn't challenged. It is natural for a school leader to want to be in control and to know what's coming next. The pandemic has forced school leaders to be spontaneous, take risks, be brave, show a huge amount of resilience and stamina and to be able to reassure and support others when things aren't always as settled and controlled as you would want them to be.

We were fortunate enough to have newly qualified teachers at school, as well as students on teaching practice. Their well-being and workload were carefully monitored, as the stresses involved in teaching through a pandemic, with little previous teaching experience, could not be underestimated. Reminders were given to them that it isn't always like this.

The paperwork for school leaders over the last 18 months has been intensive but has also upskilled leaders in assessing and managing risk and prioritising tasks on a day to day basis. The communication with stakeholders has been hugely important and has been the main driver of moving forward as a school community. More frequent newsletters to parents has helped leaders be transparent in their thinking and plans moving forward. Being open with staff about the thinking behind decisions has gained trust and respect.

To be continued next week....

Diary Dates

8th October – non-uniform day for World Mental Health day

14th October – Individual school photos in school hall

21st October- Phonics presentation for parents (zoom).

HALF TERM – Monday 25th October – Friday 29th October

Week beginning 1st November – Parents Evenings – meetings with class teachers.

12th November – Children in Need – fundraising day.

Friday 17th December 2021 - Last day of term -

Wednesday 5th January 2022 - First day back to school in Spring Term:

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We hope you have a lovely weekend.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Rebecca Westall
Headteacher

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