

Newsletter

February 2021



Dear Parents/ Carers,

At last we have received the wonderful news that all children can once again attend school; in fact, it is now mandatory that all children attend school. I am sure you are all as relieved as we are, I know it has been a stressful and worrying time for many of you.

As I said in my previous Newsletter, in June 2019 as part of the School Improvement Plan I write every year, I had decided that we would change our weekly timetable in September 2019 so that four days a week would mainly focus on reading, writing and maths and one day a week on Topic. This timetable lends itself beautifully to providing opportunities for the children once they return to 'get back on track' or to be challenged as required.

We will still have some members of staff shielding; however, these people will be covered by other members of staff. We will continue with the handwashing regime, ventilating classrooms, keeping to class 'bubbles', increased cleaning regime during the day and after school. Staff who will be teaching to different class groups ('bubbles'), ICT, Spanish and music, will wear masks when teaching (PE teachers are exempt from this) and PPE is available to any member of staff who request it. All staff on the school site will continue to carry out the rapid testing twice weekly and the procedures in place for a member of the school community displaying symptoms and/ or testing positive will continue as they have been.

We are so looking forward to having the school community back together but there will still be circumstances that will impact on how the school functions. This term we will not be able to hold parent/ teacher consultations, assess the children or provide an interim report at the end of the spring term, as the teachers have had so little contact with so many of the children.

This term we would usually hold a parent panel meeting, 'learn alongside' lessons, celebrate Easter with you and this year I had hoped that years 3 and 4 would take part in a production that would have been shared with their parents/ carers. Unfortunately, we will still be unable to hold these events.

Hot lunches will continue, albeit with a reduced menu due to Chef Diane shielding. School meals must be booked by Friday 26th February for w/c 8th March. Although we are able to continue to provide wrap around care, we will be unable to provide after school clubs for the children. Holiday Club for the Easter holidays is now open for booking. The club will run from 29th March to 1st April and 6th to 9th April.

Our school day will revert to the normal timings, the school gates opening at 8.20am and the school day finishing at 3.30pm. Years 5 and 6 will continue to enter and leave via the staff carpark, years 1-4 will enter and leave the 3G pitch via the carpark gate, reception children will enter and be collected at their classroom doors and nursery children will enter and leave via the front nursery entrance. Please can all parents/ carers continue to wear a mask when dropping off or collecting their child and leave the school premises as quickly as possible. Please can children that have loaned a laptop or iPad return them to school on the 8th March as they will be needed for teaching ICT lessons.

Some of you may have started to think about holidays, I certainly cannot wait to book somewhere! Can I please draw your attention to the local authority attendance policy that we have a duty to follow. This is available on the school website and sets out clearly the local authority's expectations with regard to taking your child out of school during term time. The local authority do not allow parents/ carers to take their child out of school during term time and a fee will be incurred if you do so. In

special circumstances the Headteacher is able to make an exception, however, the circumstances need to be extreme. Please liaise with the school office if you feel your situation does warrant exemption from incurring a fee. If you have any queries about this policy, please contact the school office.

As an aside, we have experienced some problems/ issues with some of our children in years 4, 5 and 6 with regard to social media sites. This seems to be a regular issue with children once they move into these upper year groups as they seem to find themselves in situations that they do not have the maturity to deal with. Can I please remind parents that children should be over the age of thirteen to access/ use these sites.

I will be meeting with Miss Donoghue later this week and now we know all children are returning on the 8th March, we hope to put some dates in the diary when she can come in and meet the children and parents, albeit virtually.

And so finally...

I cannot wait to see all the children back, particularly as I will only have three weeks before I retire. I would have hated to go without being able to say goodbye to each of them and have planned a small treat on their return on the 8th.

I cannot express how proud I am of our school community; the teachers who adapted so quickly to this new way of teaching, the teaching assistants and nursery nurses who have been in classes supporting the children in accessing the learning, the admin team who have kept the front of house operational and helped to allay parents/ carers fears and/ or concerns, the kitchen team who have managed to keep hot meals going even with Chef Diane sheilding and the site team and cleaners who have kept the school so clean. We have only had two occasions when we have had to send groups of children home to self-isolate. But most of all, you the parents/ carers! Overwhelmingly, you have been so supportive, so understanding, so caring and so dedicated to your children and my staff in what has been a horrible time to end a career. I cannot thank you enough!

I look forward to seeing you all on the 8th March at 8.20am, albeit over a mask! Take care until then.

Pippa Villa

Headteacher