

Newsletter

October 2020

Dear Parents/ carers,



We have been very lucky at Newton Leys School that we have had very few positive cases of Covid-19 in staff, children or parents/ carers since opening in September. I hope that those numbers stay very low!

Although there is very little to report as we are unable to carry out the activities we are usually able to enjoy such as, Meet the Teacher evening, Parent/ teacher consultations, Learn Alongside lessons, Parent Panel meetings, curriculum information evenings, school trips, visitors in, Family Play sessions and regular school events like assemblies, after school clubs, shared learning opportunities, visits to other classes etc... there is information that you do need to know.

Parent/ teacher consultation meetings

This term, and probably next term, we have needed to think about alternative ways to hold parent/ teacher consultation meetings. We have purchased a program that allows parents/ carers to book their appointment time online on a given date, and at that time, a portal will open enabling a video link between the teacher and the parent.

It has taken some organisation within school, as teachers will be absent from their class for the day and cover for them needs to be in place. The meetings will be between November 4th and November 18th. Each class teacher will have a specific day in which these virtual meetings will take place and appointment time slots will be between 8am and 4pm. This is to enable staff to be off the school premises before the cleaning team start their deep clean at the end of the day.

Parents/ carers need only a device to access the internet i.e. iPhone, iPad, laptop, computer or tablet. They will access the program, enter their child's name, date of birth and their own name and the class teacher's appointments will be available to select. Parents/ carers will be sent a link 1 hour before the appointment time and by clicking on this link at the correct time, the portal will open. Appointments will be 10 minutes with the portal closing at this point. More detailed information and instructions will be provided next week.

I am very aware that this is not the ideal way to be able to discuss your child's progress and next steps; however, it will provide a 'face to face' opportunity to have those discussions.

Bikeability

With a number of our older children now riding a bike to school, we have organised training for those children with regard to road safety when riding a bike. The training will take place at school and further information will be sent to parents towards the end of November.

Social media

Can I please remind all parents, and particularly those in year 5 and 6, that children under the age of 13 years should not be accessing social media sites i.e. Tick Tock, What's App. They can be exposed to inappropriate material and often, because of the lack of maturity of children

under 13 years, comments and responses they post on these media sites can cause distress for others.

Our responsible Year 6 students!



Our Year 6 students were presented with their school ties during the first week we returned in September. It is a symbol of the responsibility we place on them as exemplars for all other children in the school. Come on Year 6, show them how to do it!

Covid-19 Regime

Since the start of the school year, attendance has been in line with national expectations. We have only had two families (2 adults) that tested positive. No staff members have contracted Covid-19 to date.

Each year group have prepared a 'learning pack' for children who are unable to attend school due to Covid-19. If your child is unable to attend school, please contact their class teacher who will then send out the pack.

During the school day we have been able to keep classes as a bubble in their classes and sitting as a bubble in the dining hall. During outdoor lunch and break times they continue to stay as a bubble; however, they are sharing a space with the rest of their year group.

Break times and lunchtimes are staggered to reduce the number of children outside at any one time.

Additional cleaners have been employed to clean all toilet areas during the lunch break.

Hand rails and door handles are cleaned daily.

Soap and hand towels have been in every classroom with a strict handwashing regime in place. We have now purchased soap and hand towel dispensers for every classroom (£1,000). They will be installed during this week.

During half term a deep clean will take place again through the school.

We have purchased more 2m signage for the paths to remind parents/ carers of the importance of social distancing. Hand sanitiser will also be available at entry gates and the school office.

We will be changing the pickup procedure after half term as the weather will become colder, windier and wetter. All year groups, including nursery and reception, will end the school day at 3.30pm. Classes from year 1 to year 6 will line up in numerical order along the length of the 3G pitch. All parents will enter at 3.30pm. Parents will collect from reception classes (if required) and then proceed onto the 3G pitch to either leave the school premises or collect siblings from years 1 – 6. Nursery children will be collected after siblings to ensure they are in the warm for as long as possible.

Transition to secondary school

At the start of the term we emailed information to parents/ carers in year 5 with regard to the process for application to the grammar schools. In the past we have tried to organise an information evening for parents of year 5 children with regard to their options for secondary school but unfortunately the response from the secondary schools was poor.

We are now in the process of contacting these schools again to organise an information evening for November 2021 and will keep you posted of the outcome.

However, please do remember, as a parent you have the choice of applying to any school of your choice. There are a number of secondary schools that run coaches/ buses from Newton Leys to their schools: Cotteslowe Secondary School, Buckingham Secondary School and Sir Thomas Freemantle Secondary School. Other local secondary schools are Sir Herbert Leon School and Lord Grey School. We have also had children that have transitioned to Watling Way Secondary School, Walton High Secondary School and Kents Hill Secondary School. Please do catch me if you would like any further information.

Please note that the deadline for applying for a secondary place is **31st October 2020**.

And so to end....

In these very troubled and difficult times, I get so much pleasure from walking through the school and seeing and hearing the children so busy with their learning and enjoying it so much. Their school day is so very different and for four days a week, with a focus on maths, reading and writing, it demands great concentration and focus from the children. However, they have risen to the demands and have thrown themselves into their learning. I couldn't be prouder!

