



NEWSLETTER NO 1 – Monday 7th September 2020

	Term Begins	Finish		Return	Term Ends
Autumn 2020	Thursday 3 Sept	Friday 23 October	Term Half	Tuesday 3 November	Friday 18 December
Spring 2021	Tuesday 5 January	Friday 12 February		Monday 22 February	Thursday 1 April
Summer 2021	Monday 19 April	Friday 28 May		Tuesday 8 June	Wednesday 21 July

Inset Days: 2 November 2020, 4 January 2021, 7 June 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

A very warm welcome back to the new school year, especially our new EYFS families. It has been wonderful to have all the children back together and thank you everyone for supporting our Covid-19 related procedures. Whilst the term has started very smoothly, we do not intend to be complacent about the health & safety of our school community and therefore much of this email is simply reminders for your information. The school continues to receive a great deal of information about developments nationally but please do bear in mind we do not get a head start, we hear the news at the same time as yourselves - a crystal ball would be great but sadly we do not have one.

With so much to consider and review on an ongoing basis, everything is taking longer than usual so I would ask for your continued patience as we gradually share details of forthcoming arrangements regarding trips, learning and wider school provision. Our priority remains for the children to return to school safely, happily and learning effectively as a result - so far, so good.

Communication is key and there are many details to note below please:

Office/Communications

Please remember that we wish to avoid any unnecessary adults coming into the school building and therefore please use phone and email communication as much as possible. Emails can be passed easily onto class teachers or phone calls could be arranged with notice. Thank you.

Welcome

A special welcome to Kathy Groom who is joining our lunch supervision team following Ann Bignell's retirement last term; Kathy is known locally and has worked with the school on a number of occasions. I am especially grateful to Kathy for stepping up on a temporary basis at such an uncertain time whilst we review our lunch procedures in the longer term.

We still intend to celebrate Ann Bignell's long service at the school as soon as it is safe to do so however, if you would like to contribute to a gift, please place donations in a sealed envelope for the office marked 'Ann Bignell Gift'. Thank you.

PE & Music

I am delighted to confirm and introduce our new PE and Music teachers joining us from J&C Academy: Mr Powell will be teaching PE and Mr Pilbeam will be teaching Music. In keeping with our current procedures and to minimise unnecessary risk, all PE lessons will take place outside (unless the weather is very poor) and Music will be taught in the hall at a distance. We will take our usual measures to clean any equipment/space between classes.

Mr Powell will teach one of two lessons a week with each class and, on that day, children should please come to school in their PE kit:

Wednesday - Years 1, 2, 5 & 6

Friday - Years E (EYFS), 3 and 4

Please make sure the children are wearing kit appropriate to the weather and have a light waterproof coat as we do not currently have an alternative, indoor space. A second physical/outdoor lesson will be led by the class teacher but children will not need to change for this as this will allow teachers more flexibility to move the lesson to fit the weather.

'Meet the Teacher' Appointments

All children in Years 1 to 6 will receive a class-specific letter regarding 'Meet the Teacher' Appointments in the coming days. We are very aware that we have not been able to have a great deal of contact with our parents and want to offer an opportunity to meet with your child's class teacher early in the term. All things considered, these appointments are optional, but I am grateful to the staff for providing this time under the circumstances. Further explanation about the purpose and nature of this appointment is included in the full letter.

Coughs & Colds

Several parents have asked about procedures should their child fall ill with a cold, which results in a cough, or other non-Covid illness.

Unfortunately, there are no definitive instructions, however guidance suggests that a high temperature is still the key symptom and therefore children are okay to come into school unless this is present. If you are concerned, wherever possible, please check your child's temperature at home before bringing them to school - advice recommends that a child's temperature be taken at least three times over a period of 30 minutes to be sure. We understand if parents decide to keep their child at home to check symptoms do not develop further that day.

We do have an infra-red non-contact thermometer in school for monitoring purposes and will check the temperature of any child who feels unwell, has a continuous/persistent cough or suffers a loss of taste/smell. We will contact parents to collect their child if we were concerned or they are simply too unwell to engage in learning. If a child is believed to have Covid-19 symptoms parents will be advised to isolate their household for 14 days and pursue a test. We will inform the whole school community if this happens however, we do not need to take any further action until a case is confirmed.

After the disruption of the last few terms we are obviously keen to keep absence to an absolute minimum, however we also want to be cautious regarding the spread of any illness in school, especially in the Autumn/Winter months.

Please also reinforce the importance of children coughing or sneezing into their elbow - tissues and lidded 'germ' bins are provided in every classroom. Thank you.

Please remember to confirm your child's absence initially by telephone with a message on the absence option and then in writing on their return to school.

School Bags

As the children do not currently need to bring any items into school other than their lunch box and water bottle, please do not send your child to school with a school bag unnecessarily. Lunch boxes can be carried by hand and, the fewer belongings the children have the less time they need to spend in the cloakroom and the quicker we can start lessons.

Arrival/Collection Playground Supervision

Please can we remind parents to closely supervise their children before and after school and reinforce the social distancing message. The children should not be using any school equipment or activities (playground shelter, tyres etc.) as we are unable to clean these effectively. We appreciate this is demanding of you and frustrating when the children are so keen to play together but this is more in keeping with our school procedures and reassuring to everyone moving about our school grounds.

Wrap-around Care

We continue to collaborate and discuss wraparound care with the Pre-school in the hope of reintroducing some provision as soon as possible. Although there is some flexibility for schools, we provide joint provision across two settings across multiple year groups - this poses a more serious problem should we get a confirmed case of Covid-19 as this could close both settings completely.

Home Learning

Our priority understandably remains learning in school and, as we wish to minimise items moving between home and school, we will not yet be providing any home learning for the children. This includes the provision of reading books or resources for use at home. Whilst we wish to begin home learning as soon as possible, this time will provide us with the opportunity to review our provision, including the continued use and integration of Class Dojo for Years 1 to 6. If the children produce something in school which we are unable to store in school, we will leave such items untouched over the weekend before sending them home with the children on a Monday. Use of Tapestry will continue in EYFS as this is already fully established and purely electronic.

Barnardos

Please find attached a helpful guide for when schools open from Barnardos with tips for parents on supporting their child's mental health.

Mr M Tomson

Headteacher

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