

Friday 11 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

We are now reaching the end of the first full week back and I wanted to update you with how things are going. I am sending this letter out to you but, in an effort both to cut down on paper and also prevent multiple different hands touching paper, you need to be aware that **we are no longer sending out every piece of information on paper**. We will continue sending you emails and we will also put information on our website, under Covid-19 information or Parents/Carers (Letters to Parents/Carers), **so please get into the habit of checking emails and looking at the website regularly**.

So, how are things going so far?

- I must **thank you** all for being so punctual and following our new arrangements for entering and exiting school. I think that they are going very well, which makes entrance and exit to school as safe as we can for our children. One thing that would make things even better would be for **parents and carers to keep a distance of at least 1m-2m in the playground** while they are waiting for children to come out.
- Our children are clearly very happy to be back and come into school with big smiles, which is fantastic. The most important thing for children (and everyone) to be able to learn is to feel safe and happy, so we are spending these first few weeks really re-establishing relationships with the children, as well as working out exactly what each child's learning needs are.
- Some of the children are getting a bit hungry before and after lunchtime. I think this is partly because lunchtimes are slightly later than usual for Y5 and Y6 children and also because some of the children may have got in the habit of eating more at whatever time of day they want. Therefore, if **children are in KS2, please think about providing a healthy snack, such as an apple, orange or banana as a snack mid-morning**. (Children in in EYFS and KS1 are still able to get free snacks at school.)
- Attendance is very up and down at the moment and this is only to be expected. If you have had children in school for a while you are likely to know that in the first weeks and even months of school, **children catch bugs and colds – this is absolutely normal and, although you will undoubtedly be anxious, it is to be expected**. The guidance regarding tests seems to be ever-changing at the moment and so the last paragraph of this letter has the most up to date guidance from Public Health Sheffield and the DfE.
- After much thinking about the pros and cons of changing for PE, I have decided that **for the time being children may come to school in their PE kit on the days that they have PE – please check class pages on the website for further information**. The main reason for this is because of the length of time it is taking for children to change clothes at the moment, especially young children. Children **must bring a pair of plimsolls or trainers for PE – black-soled trainers will not be allowed**.

- We will start putting homework on the website either this week or next week and so we are sending home user names and passwords for each child from Y1 upwards with this letter. Please keep them safe. If there are any quarantines for any classes in the future weeks and months, work will be available for children via the school website.

What to do if your child is ill:

As I mentioned earlier, the beginning of the school year brings about lots of germs and bugs. This is inevitable, despite the huge amount of cleaning that takes place in school across the day.

Children's general immunity will also have decreased due to the fact that most children have not been in school with other children for the last six months or so. Therefore, it is very possible that your child may be ill at some point over the coming months but it does not mean that s/he has automatically got Covid-19. However, of course it doesn't mean that your child hasn't got it either.

At the moment we have a few children across school who have a sore throat, a runny nose or have vomited. We even have a couple of cases of suspected croup (this illness is not long lasting but a symptom is a barking cough and antibiotics may be required).

At the beginning of the term, the advice schools were given was to ask parents to arrange for their child to have a Covid-19 test if any one or more of the following symptoms occurred:

- a new consistent cough
- a high temperature
- a loss or change of smell or taste.

This advice is still in place. However, possibly due to both the increase in demand of tests due to everyone following the government's advice and also the amount of negative test results that are coming through, **schools have now been advised that parents and carers should contact their GP or pharmacist for advice if they are in any doubt about whether they should ask for a test or not** unless they are really concerned that their child might have Covid-19.

Therefore, if your child is ill, please keep them off school and contact school as soon as possible to let us know why your child is absent – this is really important. We can then discuss with you what actions to take if you are unsure.

I know that this is a time of ever-changing advice and information but we will do our very best to keep you as up to date as possible.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact school. Ms Elliott and I are more than happy to talk with you and discuss anything related to your child's health, well-being and education.

Thank you for your continued support in these unprecedented times.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Gray
(Headteacher)