

SCHOOL NEWS

Date Changes | Staff Testing | Parents' Evening

Calendar Dates

Due to the partial opening of school until at least 8th March 2021, we have decided to postpone the INSET day planned for Monday 22nd February and re-schedule it for Monday 12th April. Therefore, after half term, children should return to their home learning or school, if they are currently attending, on Monday 22nd February.

The holiday dates for the academic year 2021/2022 can be found on the website calendar.

Key dates for this term can be found on the Year Group Termly Newsletter which has been emailed home this week.

Staff Testing

This week we have rolled out the Lateral Flow Device Testing for all staff. This has been introduced nationally on the basis that one in three adults have been found to be asymptomatic - testing positive for COVID-19, but not showing any symptoms. Staff will be testing twice a week and in the event of a positive result, they will have to self isolate and take a PCR test (the test we are all familiar with). Until the result is obtained, all close contacts will have to self-isolate. If the test comes back negative, then the bubble will be welcomed back into school. If it proves to be positive, the isolation period would be 10 days from the last point of contact. Therefore, you might find that isolation periods will differ from those we have put in place so far.

Pupil Places

We are still operating at our absolute maximum limit for school places for vulnerable and critical worker children. I am still receiving a great deal of requests for places. If anything, we are still looking to reduce our numbers in order to keep school as safe as possible. The more children we have in, the more likely it is for the virus to spread and the more likely it is for bubbles to close. Home learning and lockdown is difficult for many of us, but we have to limit the spread of the virus as much as we can during these coming weeks in order for us to open fully as soon as possible.

Please be aware that school will not be open for vulnerable and critical worker children over the half term holiday. Anyone receiving vouchers for Free School Meals from us, will receive them directly from the Local Authority for the holiday week.

Parents' Evening

We will be holding a virtual Parents' Evening after half term over Tuesday 23rd, Wednesday 24th and Thursday 25th February. From Monday 8th February, you will be able to book an appointment via the usual system on the website and you will be able to see the days and times your child's teacher has available. More information will be sent about booking next week. The appointment will take place using Zoom and once you have booked an appointment, the class teachers will be in touch with a link for your appointment. There will be a strict time limit of 10 minutes for your appointment.





Welcome!

New Parent Governor

I am really pleased to welcome Mrs Denise Maskew to the Board of Governors, representing the parent body. She will bring a great deal of skills and experience, and will be a real asset to the team.

Governors' Resources Committee

This week the Governors' Resources Committee met and agreed the updated Health and Safety Policy and reviewed the most recent audit carried out by the Local Authority Health and Safety team. The school COVID-19 Risk Assessment was also reviewed and agreed, having been updated earlier this month.

Google Meet PSHE sessions



This week we have been pleased to roll out our Google Meet PSHE sessions. We are really keen to encourage some socialisation between children both at home and at school. In our sessions we might just say hello, share some good work, play some games or exchange news. Please let me know how your child has found the sessions and if it has added a new dimension to the home/school learning. There may have been a couple of technical problems, but we hope to have these ironed out by next week.



ClassDojo

We have had amazing engagement with ClassDojo for our home learning programme. Thank you for your extremely positive feedback; it is very much appreciated. We are really looking to preserve all the hard work the children are producing at home and are asking that, where possible, children save their work to their 'Portfolio' in ClassDojo. This way, all their work is kept together - rather than on the message feed - and it is easy to transfer when they move to the next class. I am also able to view the work completed in portfolio, though I can't see it if it is on a message to the teacher. I'm looking forward to 'liking' and commenting on some of the amazing work I see. If you have any difficulties with uploading to Portfolio, please just let us know.

Wrap Around Care

We have had a couple of enquiries about the provision of breakfast and after school club and as I said it would be reviewed in the Spring Term it is prudent to give you an update. As we are currently in a third lockdown, with no certain date of return, we are unable to provide any wrap around care at the moment. Even on full return, we will be undoubtedly continuing under the same tight restrictions we had operating in the Autumn Term. When it is safe to do so and we feel confident in being able to mix bubbles in the provision, we will look to tender for a provider and re-instate the care. I will update you once I have further information.

Kind regards,

Cathy Beddows
and the Etchells staff

