

21st April 2021



Dear Parents,

As we welcome you all back to a new summer term, we hope you are keeping well and have had a good Easter holiday. We are looking forward to a happy, healthy and successful summer term where the children can continue to flourish, grow and develop.

Thank you for your recent participation in our telephone parent teacher consultations. It is a good opportunity to discuss your child/ren's progress and development. Thank you for your many kind comments and positive feedback. It is appreciated.

During the Easter holidays, the exciting new redevelopment of the Early Years Foundation Stage outside area and improvements to the Sensory Garden have commenced. After a number of years of continuous use, both areas are now requiring improvement and enhancement. We believe the new developments will provide enhanced opportunities for outdoor learning, enabling our children to learn, explore and play in our lovely outdoor environment. It is anticipated that the works will be completed this term and the children will be able to use the areas again soon.

Over the coming week, the children will be introduced to their new Learning Adventure for this half term. We will provide you with further details in due course.

Staff News

At the end of this academic year, Miss Maese will be leaving Rushcombe First School to commence a new teaching role at another school in the autumn. Miss Maese will be able to complete the academic year with her current class. We are grateful for her hard work and commitment during her time at Rushcombe and wish her all the best for the future.

In addition, Mr Cuthbert, one of our teaching assistants, will be leaving the school soon to commence his new career. We wish him all the best for the future and thank him for his hard work and support.

Minimising Risk to the School Community

As restrictions relax, it is important that we all continue to be vigilant to avoid the spread of the virus and ensure the health and safety of our whole school community. Everyone's support in minimising the possibility of anyone becoming unwell and the need to self-isolate, is important. Please continue to keep to the school's staggered system for school drop off and collection times, including the use of the one-way system on the playground, maintaining appropriate social distancing, utilising a face mask/cover during drop off and collection times [unless you have a pre-existing health condition] and ensuring only one person accompanies your child to school. If you have any messages for your child's teacher, please contact them via the school office email, rather than relaying messages on the door in the morning - this will help to ensure that the staggered timings work effectively and help to keep everyone safe. Your support and cooperation is much appreciated.

As a school community working together, we can also reduce the risks by:

- **limiting contact with people outside of our households – currently outdoor gatherings of either six people or two households are allowed**
- **making sure that children and staff do not attend school if they or a member of their household has symptoms of coronavirus – it will be necessary to send a child/adult home if they become unwell**
- **self-isolating if you or anyone in your household has symptoms of Covid-19 immediately and booking a test for anyone with symptoms - if you are waiting for a test result you and your whole household must self-isolate until you get the result**

- if you or someone in your household receives a positive test result or have been identified as a close contact, you must self-isolate for the required time period
- expecting everyone to continue to follow the guidance in and out of school regarding contact and social/physical distancing, including wearing facemasks where required and particularly when the appropriate social distancing is difficult to maintain
- promoting regular hand washing for at least 20 seconds with water and soap or use of sanitiser and ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the catch it, bin it, kill it approach

Asymptomatic Testing [Rapid Lateral Flow Device Tests for Anyone Without Symptoms]

As you are aware the Government have recently announced, that anyone without symptoms can now access regular rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing. All people in England will be able to [access twice weekly rapid tests for coronavirus](#). **Lateral Flow Device Test** kits can either be collected or ordered online, as set out below. **If your child or someone in your household develops potential symptoms of Coronavirus, you must book or order a PCR test.** Secondary school and college students will continue to access testing through their school or college. Undertaking regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing helps reduce transmission of the virus. Tests are fast, easy and completely free. The expanded regular testing offer for people without symptoms will be delivered through:

- a home ordering service, which allows people to order lateral flow tests online to be delivered to their home
- workplace testing programmes, on-site or at home
- community testing, offered by all local authorities
- collection at a local PCR test site during specific test collection time windows
- a new 'Pharmacy Collect' service

See link above for further details. If you have any queries about the tests, please call 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day from 7am to 11pm. Please note that, for anybody demonstrating symptoms of coronavirus, they should continue to book a PCR test through the NHS website.

School staff will continue to complete regular lateral flow device tests.

Primary School Children and Rapid Asymptomatic Testing

On advice from Public Health England [PHE], children in primary schools have not been included in the rapid asymptomatic testing programme. During the recent school holidays, the Department of Education have updated their information to indicate that parents may wish to consider whether to test asymptomatic children under the age of 11. The DfE information states that 'Advice from Public Health England is that there is currently limited public health benefit from testing primary school age children with lateral flow devices (LFDs). Primary school age children may find the LFD testing process invasive and unpleasant and are unable to self-swab.'

If a child or a member of your household develops potential symptoms of Coronavirus you should continue to follow the [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and [book a PCR test](#) for the child. **Rapid LFD tests should not be offered to individuals who develop coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, regardless of their age.**

Confirmatory Polymerase Chain Reaction [PCR] Testing for Positive Lateral Flow Device [LFD] Tests

A confirmatory PCR test is required for anyone receiving a positive LFD test. The PCR test should be booked immediately either [online](#) or by calling 119 and should be undertaken within 2 days. Anyone who had a positive LFD test result and other members of their household, should self-isolate immediately in line with [NHS Test and Trace guidance](#) and while awaiting the PCR test result. If the PCR test is negative, it overrides the LFD test and the person and their close contacts can then end their self-isolation.

Coronavirus [Covid-19] Guidance

Please remember that if your child or any member of the household have symptoms of coronavirus infection [COVID-19], **however mild**, you will all need to stay at home for 10 days from when the symptoms started. The most common symptoms of coronavirus [COVID-19] are:

- **High temperature [feels hot to touch on the back or chest – a temperature of 37.6 degrees and above]**
- **New continuous cough [this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)]**
- **Loss or change to your normal sense of smell or taste [anosmia]**

More details of the symptoms can be found: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

It is important that anyone with symptoms is tested. If your child presents with Covid-19 symptoms, they will not be able to come to school and you should book a test. A PCR test can be booked or ordered online via NHS UK, using the following link: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/>

It is essential that the school is advised of the test outcome. Where the child or staff member tests negative, they can return to school, if they are well enough, and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation. If there is a confirmed case in school, it may be necessary for other children/groups of children and staff to isolate at home. We will work closely with Public Health England who will advise us of the course of action.

If your child appears to present with any of these symptoms when they are in school, we will contact you and you will be advised to follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance](#).

You can seek further medical advice from NHS 111 and you can also use the Department for Education coronavirus helpline, which is available to answer questions about COVID-19 on T: 0800 046 8687. The helpline is open between 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday) and 10am to 4pm (Saturday to Sunday).

The school will endeavour to remain open, however, if there are confirmed case/s or insufficient safe staffing levels, the school may have to close or partially close for a period of time. The school will keep parents updated with any decisions by parentmail as soon as they can. If in the event that children have to self-isolate at home or that our school has to be partially/closed, teaching staff will provide home learning for each child/year group via Microsoft Teams.

Sun Protection and Water Bottles

With the beginning of the summer term, we hope that there will be plenty of sunny days ahead and the children will be able to make good use of the field and outside areas. Please make sure your child has a sun-hat to wear and a water bottle in school for the coming months. Sun hats and water bottles can be purchased from the school office. We recommend you apply sun lotion to your child/ren before school. If required, further protective sun screen can be applied during the day by the children. We have been notified by the school nurse that some sun lotions contain nut products. We would appreciate if you could not use these products at school, as we have some children who have severe allergic reactions to nuts. The children will be told not to share sun lotion with other children. A reminder, that water bottles should contain water only rather than fizzy drinks, squashes or juices. Thank you for your cooperation in these matters.

PE Kits

A reminder, that all children should have their PE kit in school every day to participate fully in the PE curriculum. With the commencement of the summer term, please could you ensure your child has black plimsolls/trainers in school to use for outdoors PE. The school also has a supply of PE bags in school that are available from the office for £4.00. We would appreciate that the children do not use large back packs as they can be difficult to store in the cloakrooms and on the cloak pegs.

School Office and Messages for Staff

A reminder that **the school office is only partially open to parents and visitors and we ask that you refrain from visiting the school office wherever this can be avoided. In the first instance, we request that all communications are made via email or phone to the school office**, including any messages for your child's teacher. A telephone appointment to speak with a member of staff will be made for you if necessary. If you need to visit the school office for essential reasons [or if agreed with a member of the school office], the entrance area has been marked with physical/social distancing demarcations and there is a taped line by the office window to ensure the appropriate social/physical distance is in place. In the office foyer, there are two boxes/containers, one for paperwork, such as, letters/permission slips, and one for objects/parcels. Entrance to other areas of the school

will not be permitted, unless by prior agreement/appointment. We would be grateful if you could wear a face mask/covering when visiting the school office, unless you have a medical exemption.

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 20 th April 2021	Children return to school for the summer term
Monday 3 rd May 2021	School closed – May Bank Holiday
Monday 31 st May – Friday 4 th June 2021	Summer half term holiday
Friday 23 rd July 2021	Last day of the summer term

Further dates for your diary will follow in due course including information about annual reports and summer term parent teacher consultations.

Monday 6 th September 2021	Autumn term commences for the children
Friday 22 nd October 2021	School closed for staff training day
Monday 25 th October – Friday 29 th October	Autumn half term holiday
Friday 17 th December 2021	Last day of the autumn term
Tuesday 4 th January 2022	School closed for staff training day
Wednesday 5 th January 2022	Spring term commences for the children
Monday 21 st February – Friday 25 th February	Spring half term holiday
Friday 8 th April 2022	Last day of the spring term
Monday 25 th April 2022	School closed for staff training day
Tuesday 26 th April 2022	Summer term commences for the children
Monday 2 nd May 2022	School closed – May Bank Holiday
Monday 30 th May – Friday 3 rd June 2022	Summer half term holiday
Friday 22 nd July 2022	Last day of the summer term

Please see the attached new academic year calendar including training days for further details.

Monday 5 th September 2022	Autumn term commences for the children
---------------------------------------	--

Finally

We are looking forward to a happy, healthy and successful summer term where the children can continue to flourish, grow and develop. We thank you all for your continued support, understanding and cooperation. By working together, we hope that we can ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of our whole school community.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs C Mahon
Headteacher

Enc. Dorset School Term Dates: 2021-2022 Academic Year