

Newsletter 3 Autumn Term 2021

14th October 2021

Dear Parents,

As we come towards the end of the first half term of the new academic year, I would like to say well done to all the children – they have settled so well in to their new classes/school and made positive progress this half term. I would also like to thank all the staff for their hard work and to all our families for their support.

It has been wonderful to see the children enjoying the school's current Learning Adventure, 'The Island', including the many purposeful learning opportunities they have been engaging with. Within their year groups, the children have worked together to decide upon how the adventure unfolds, with the teachers planning a range of learning tasks in response to the children's ideas. Here are some examples of the learning activities that have taken place in the different year groups over the past week: in Foundation, the children have been developing their teamwork skills by helping to save a beached whale, and developing their thinking and communication skills linked to the problem of a turtle getting tangled in a fishing net; in Year 1, the children have created their own large scale version of the island in the school hall, explored setting up their campsite, and written instructions about how to build a campfire; in Year 2, the children have been using their mathematical problem solving skills to help them design a set of steps to help them overcome a mud slide on the beach; in Year 3, the children have imagined foraging for different fruits on the island, which they have used to create a tasty and nutritious drink to help sustain them on the island, including learning about fractions of amounts when designing their drink; in Year 4, the children have set up a sanctuary on the island, with the intention of protecting the diverse range of wildlife, and have written a range of non-fiction texts to communicate the importance of the wildlife on the island. Over the final weeks of the project, the children will be encouraged to think about what the island means to them, and how they will look to protect it for future generations.

Last week, the school was visited by two of Dorset Council's new Education Challenge Leads to see the school in action and meet with the leadership team. Our visitors visited each year group and discussed the school with Mr White and I. They provided highly positive feedback about the school. Well done to all children and staff.

Minimising Risk to the School Community

As you may be aware, there has recently been a small number of positive COVID-19 cases in our school community and with the number of cases, locally and nationally, we all need to continue to take care and remain vigilant. The health, safety and wellbeing of all our children, staff and wider community is of paramount importance. It is important that we remain considerate of vulnerable members of our community, as well as limiting the possibility of people becoming unwell.

We would like to thank parents who have continued to follow the guidelines, including arranging for their child/ren to have PCR tests when recommended. **Children under the age of 18 years old and fully vaccinated adults do not need to self-isolate as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case, however, if a member of your household tests positive for COVID-19, it is important that all members of the household have a PCR test.** The guidelines indicate that your child can continue to come to school whilst they await the outcome of their PCR test result, unless they have symptoms. In the event that your child is awaiting the outcome of a PCR test following a member of the household testing positive, you may wish to consider keeping your child at home until they receive a negative result, in order to reduce the risk of onward transmission. The school will provide home learning, whilst you await for a result or if you choose for your child to remain at home if a member of the household has tested positive.

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We are asking everyone to maintain the systems and protocols we have put in place on our school grounds, such as, the one way system at drop off/collection times including using the playground markings, utilising the school timings and considering the wearing of masks when it is busy (unless you have a pre-existing health condition). In order to ensure that the staggered timings work effectively and limit the number of people arriving and leaving the school at one time, **please make every effort to keep to your allocated time slot and to leave the school grounds promptly after drop off/collection. Please also continue to use the red lines outside each year group to queue for drop off/collection**, ensuring that parents do not come any further forward than the red line nearest to your child's year group entrance - this is to enable social distancing for both parents and staff. We also ask parents to avoid congregating in groups on the school site, and to ensure that only one person accompanies your child to school. By taking these measures, we hope to reduce opportunities for the virus to transmit, with the aim of ensuring the wellbeing of all and enabling children to remain in school. Your continued support, understanding and cooperation is appreciated.

Staff News

This week, we welcome Miss Tudor, a new teaching assistant, to our support staff team. We look forward to working with her.

Parent Teacher Consultations

After the half term break, parent teacher consultations will be held on Tuesday 2nd November, Wednesday 3rd November and Thursday 4th November. This is an opportunity for you to discuss how your child has settled in to /back to school and to discuss their progress with their class teacher/s. Telephone appointment using the online electronic booking system will be available from Monday 18th October. Each telephone appointment will be allocated a 10 minute slot. There will be a short gap between appointments to enable staff to ring the next person. Staff will endeavour to keep to time and ring you as close to your time slot as possible. Our teaching team look forward to talking to you soon.

School Photographs

Recently, the children had their individual school photographs taken and they have now taken the proofs home to you. If you wish to order photographs, please order direct from Fraser Portraits online by Monday 18th October. Thank you. <https://fraserportraits.com/>

Year 2 Phonic Screening Check

Children in Year 1 usually complete the national phonic screening check in June, however, this was postponed by the government. Schools have been advised that Year 2 children will now be required to complete the Phonic Screening Check during the second half of the autumn term. Our Year 2 teaching team are continuing to consolidate and develop the Year 2 children phonic skills in preparation for the assessment later in the autumn term. The Year 2 team will send some further information soon. We would appreciate it if you could continue to support your children with regular reading and to practise their phonic skills and knowledge.

School Timings

All children should be in school by 8.45 am in the morning. It is important that children are in school on time to commence their learning promptly. There are three staggered drop off and collection times. Each family has been allocated a designated time slot and it will be helpful that families arrive and leave during their designated time slot:

Families with a **surname commencing A – E** will drop off between **8.30 am – 8.35 am** and pick up between **3.00 pm – 3.05 pm**.

Families with a **surname commencing F – M** will drop off between **8.35 am – 8.40 am** and pick up between **3.05 pm – 3.10 pm**.

Families with a **surname commencing N – Z** will drop off between **8.40 am – 8.45 am** and pick up between **3.10 pm – 3.15 pm**.

We are aware that a few families may need to use a different time slot due to other commitments.

Attendance and Leave of Absence

A reminder that school is unable to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances; holiday requests do not fall into this category and will not be approved as authorised absence.

Dorset Local Authority has issued the following guidance:

In law, parents and carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their children at school. Therefore any unauthorised absence, such as taking holidays in term time, can result in a Fixed Term Penalty Notice. Failure to pay a Fixed Term Penalty Notice may result in a criminal conviction and a fine in the Magistrates Court of up to £1000.

If, after carefully considering all of the above, you still wish to request permission for your child to be absent from school, please complete an absence of leave request form [available from the school office] and submit the application with a covering letter and supporting documents. Please note that your application will not be considered unless a letter is attached. The school calendar for the 2021-2022 and the Dorset Council term dates for 2022–2023 academic years are attached for your information. Please note the training days for 2022- 2023 have yet to be confirmed.

PE Kits

A reminder that all children should have their PE kit in school every day to participate fully in the PE curriculum. 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.

Water Bottles

We would be grateful if you could ensure your child has a water bottle in school to use during the day and that the water bottle contains water and not other drinks, such as, juices. Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Coronavirus [Covid-19] Guidance

Please remember that if your child/ren have symptoms of coronavirus infection [COVID-19], **however mild**, they will need to stay at home for 10 days from when the symptoms started. **Your child/ren must not come in to school if they are displaying any symptoms of Covid 19.** 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/> or by calling 119. Your household should isolate until you receive the test results giving the all clear.

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.

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.**

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 insufficient safe staffing levels, the school may have to close or partially close for a period of time. The school will continue to work closely with Dorset Council and Public Health Dorset to inform its decision making. 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 remote learning for each child/year group via Microsoft Teams.

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

Please note that 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 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 can then end their self-isolation.

Contact Tracing

As you may be aware, schools will no longer be responsible for contact tracing. NHS Test and Trace has taken on this responsibility and will work with parents and carers to identify close contacts of a positive case. NHS Test and Trace use the same criteria as schools have previously to identify close contacts and determine any self-isolation periods for adults and children. It remains important to report any positive test results to school to record absence accordingly.

Self-isolation

From Monday 16th August, children under the age of 18 years old and fully vaccinated adults no longer need to self-isolate as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. **Instead of self-isolating, these close contacts will be identified using the same criteria as schools have used previously and will be advised to take a PCR test.** Adults who are not fully vaccinated and are close contacts of a positive case must self-isolate.

An Additional Date for your Diary

The school has been advised by Dorset Council that schools will close for an additional day as part of the Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday. As the Platinum Jubilee falls within the summer half term break, the school will now be closed on Monday 6th June.

Finally

A reminder that on Friday 22nd October there will be a staff training day and that the half term break commences on Monday 25th October. I hope you have a lovely half term break and I look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday 1st November.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in helping us to sustain the health, safety and wellbeing of our whole school community.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs C Mahon
Headteacher