

23rd November 2021

Dear Parents,

Thank you to everyone who recently contributed to Children in Need as part of our non-uniform day. The children enjoyed wearing many different outfits and costumes – we even had our own Pudsey Bear in the form of Mrs Horton in her onesie! I am delighted that our school community raised much needed funds, which will contribute to the different charities and projects supported by Children in Need. In doing so, we have helped to support the safety, happiness and wellbeing of different groups of children and young people, both locally and across the country.

Our new Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor area has now had some lovely planting added that will enhance the area. We look forward to seeing the plants grow and develop over the seasons.

In addition, our historical Learning Adventure continues to be enjoyed by the children, with each year group holding a special outdoor learning day over the coming weeks, including re-enactments and different activities about life during the period they are studying. It is so lovely to see the children's great engagement, enjoyment and commitment to their learning this term and I am grateful to all the staff for continuing to provide exciting and motivating learning experiences, enabling the children to develop, progress and flourish.

Minimising Risk to the School Community

As you may be aware, due to a steep rise in case rates throughout October, Public Health Dorset, BCP Council and Dorset Council provided additional guidance across the county to reduce transmission of COVID-19 for after the half term break. This was a joint approach across the South West region, which set out further measures for schools to take within the Department for Education's Contingency Framework, including enhanced testing requirements, face coverings in communal areas (adults), limiting large gatherings and mixing between groups. The measures have been further extended until at least the end of November.

There has continued to be a number of positive COVID-19 cases in our school and local community with children and parents having to self-isolate. Our thoughts and best wishes are with them. As a result, 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. The school will endeavour to do all it can but it must be recognised that the school cannot eliminate all risk. **It is important that everyone with potential symptoms of coronavirus infection [COVID-19], however mild, do not attend school and arrange to have a PCR test.**

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. Some children/people may be asymptomatic and it is important that everyone arranges to have a PCR test when recommended. **If a member of your household tests positive for COVID-19, it is important that all members of the household have a PCR test as soon as possible.** 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.**

Household siblings of confirmed cases are advised to take daily LFD tests [for primary aged children, this is at the discretion of the parent / guardian], including while awaiting their PCR test results and for the duration of the isolation period of their family member who has tested positive. Daily LFD tests are also recommended in the event that your child is identified as a close contact at school, once again at the discretion of the parent / guardian.

By acting as a community to try to limit onward transmission, we not only act to protect the wellbeing of everybody, but also look to ensure that children are able to continue to attend school. Through taking steps to minimise onward transmission where we can (in the event that somebody in your family has symptoms of coronavirus, is awaiting the results of a PCR test, or tests positive for coronavirus), and by continuing to keep to the guidelines, we will be reducing the risk of onward transmission within the school and local community. In the event of teachers becoming unwell, there may not be sufficient safe staffing levels, which could result in the school needing 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 it 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.

We are asking everyone to maintain the systems and protocols we have put in place on our school grounds, such as:

- Utilising the one-way system at drop off/collection times including using the playground markings.
- Utilising the school staggered timings, including making every effort to keep to your allocated time slot and to leave the school grounds promptly after 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.
- Considering the wearing of masks when it is busy (unless you have a pre-existing health condition).
- Avoiding congregating in groups on the school site.
- Ensuring 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.

Christmas Events and Activities

As part of our upcoming Christmas celebrations, the children will take part in a range of exciting events and learning activities, enabling this to be a special and enjoyable time. The children will be making Christmas decorations, creating their Christmas cards and learning about the Christmas story, including thinking about the meaning of this special time of year for Christians and for themselves. As part of our Christmas celebrations, all the children in the last week will be involved in a range of Christmas activities, and on the last day, Friday 17th December, all children can wear their own/party clothes.

Due to the ongoing exceptional circumstances, local infection rates and the current enhanced measures, the school will not be able to hold all our different Christmas events and activities this year, particularly those where parents join us in school, such as our Christmas decoration events and our performances. We realise that this may be disappointing but we hope you understand that we wish to do all we can to ensure our school community remains safe and for families to be able to enjoy their special time/festivities at Christmas time. In place of holding a live performance in the school hall, each year group will be making a Christmas video, which will be shared with families via Microsoft Teams. The children greatly enjoyed preparing their video last year, and we anticipate equally high levels of enthusiasm again, as the children work together on this special project. We very much look forward to sharing the videos with you at the end of the term.

Children will be able to exchange Christmas cards with other children in their class, if their parents wish them to do so. They should bring their cards into school and place them in the designated tray in their classroom. The cards will then be sorted and handed out during the week. Please note that we will only be able to facilitate the handing out of Christmas cards to children in your child's class and not to children in other classes/year groups.

If you order school packed lunches, Chartwells will be providing a Christmas packed lunch on Thursday 16th December. The school has been advised that the festive menu is now available online to order and that if you have previously chosen the alternative option, this will automatically transfer to the vegetarian option, however, you may go online to amend this or place an order if you wish, up until the cut-off point of midnight on Sunday 5th December.

Vision Screening for Children in Early Years Foundation Stage

The school was advised that the vision screening for Wednesday 17th November had to be postponed. A new date has now been scheduled for Monday, 10th January 2022.

Flu Immunisation

As you are aware, the school has been advised that the scheduled flu immunisation for children, due to take place on Tuesday 23rd November at the school, had to be postponed due to staff shortages. The school has not yet been advised of a new date and will update families when the school has been updated.

Coronavirus [Covid-19] Guidance

Please remember that if your child/ren test positive for symptoms of coronavirus infection [COVID-19], they will need to stay at home for 10 days from after the symptoms started. **Public Health Dorset advises that the day symptoms commenced or the positive test date, if there are no symptoms, is day 0 and a further 10 days of self-isolation is required. Your child/ren must not come in to school if they are displaying any symptoms of Covid 19, however mild.** If your child presents with symptoms of Covid-19 they will need to have a PCR test and receive a negative result before they can come back to school. 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).

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.

Finally

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,

C Mahon

Mrs C Mahon
Headteacher