



Headteacher

Mr Richard Catchpole BSc (Hons) PGCE NPQH

Email: admin@busbridge-junior.surrey.sch.uk
Website: www.busbridge-junior.surrey.sch.uk

Friday 6th November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Autumn Term 2020 – Headteacher update #4

I hope you had an enjoyable half term. Back at school, we continue to enjoy welcoming your children each day. Attendance is currently just over 98% which is fantastic. My cycle home from school yesterday was accompanied by the whizzes and bangs of fireworks – a very sad substitute for our annual Friends of BJS PTA Fireworks extravaganza. Next year ...?

(1) National Lockdown #2 : 5th November to 2nd December

Along with everyone else we were informed of the National lockdown on Saturday. Since then have awaited further information from the Department for Education. This was released to schools on Wednesday evening. The overriding principle of the new guidelines is to keep schools open, to keep making them as safe as we can by continuing with the hygiene and cleaning measures that we have in place. You will have seen from the email sent to you on Wednesday that we have taken some additional measures to safeguard children and staff. Having now had time to read and discuss the guidance, please note the following changes that we will be implementing:

Clinically vulnerable individuals

The guidelines state that staff or children who are clinically vulnerable, but not extremely clinically vulnerable, should still attend school. If you have any concerns in this area, please do speak to myself or Mrs Barker.

Face masks / visors

During the period of National Lockdown we are aiming to further reduce the number of visitors to the school site. Visitors, such as contractors and music lesson teachers, will be asked to wear a face covering whilst on the school site and any staff interacting with them will wear a mask/visor whilst in their company.

The guidance makes it very clear that teaching staff are not expected to wear masks whilst teaching children, however staff will be wearing face coverings in communal areas, such as the staffroom, where social distancing is more of a challenge.

From Friday 6th November please could all parents coming on to the school site (e.g. the playground) wear a face mask or face visor. Please also remember to carry out safe social distancing when waiting for your child at the end of the day. We strongly suggest that you wear a face mask or visor whilst dropping off or waiting for your child on the approaches to the school - thank you.

The School Curriculum

The Chief Medical Officer has stated that it is important that '*children continue to remain fit and active*' and therefore the guidelines recommend that PE and Games continue to happen as much as possible. Your children will remain in their consistent groups for sport with extra cleaning procedures in place. Outside agencies will continue to send their sports coaches in to school to deliver aspects of the PE curriculum.



Extra-Curricular Clubs

Guidelines from the DfE make a clear distinction between the teaching of the curriculum and before/after school clubs. They state that *'where schools are offering extra-curricular activities (that is before and after school clubs) they should only do so where it is reasonably necessary to support parents to work, search for work or undertake training or education.'* Therefore, to comply with the DfE guidance **as of Monday 9th November before and after school clubs will 'pause' for the duration of the national lockdown.**

Please note that the **school's Breakfast and After School Club will keep running** during the National Lockdown. Should you need to make use of this before or after school childcare, please contact Mrs McPhail who runs our breakfast and after school club Jmcphail@busbridge-junior.surrey.sch.uk.

We appreciate that this will be extremely disappointing news as we know that these clubs are valued by all concerned. However the DfE guidance is very clear on this matter. We will look to enable their resumption as soon as we are allowed to do so.

Educational Visits and Trips

Please note that the upcoming educational trips to the Rural Life Centre and Haselmere Museum by Year 5 and Year 6 respectively have had to be cancelled. The children's timetables return to normal for those days (e.g. Year 5 come to school in their PE kit). Further details will be sent separately to you regarding this.

(2) 'Covid Catch-Up 'at BJS

We have noticed a slight learning-lag in the children following the first National Lockdown, but not as marked as we thought it may have been. We are actioning plans to help make up for any lost learning.

- (i) Start-of-year assessments in English and maths: these have helped to highlight general areas that teachers need to focus on in their lesson planning and delivery.
- (ii) Differentiation in class: we continue to provide in-lesson differentiation on a daily basis. This enables the children to be challenged at an appropriate level.
- (iii) Maths Catch-Up: a very talented dance teacher, Grace Black, is teaching dance to the Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 children on Mondays. This provides release time for the class teachers to deliver small group catch-up sessions to specific children in their classes. This happens for Year 6 in a slightly different way on Wednesdays.
- (iv) English Catch-Up: From next week Mrs Lucas (ex-BJS teacher) is joining us every morning to create a third group during our English lessons. This will enable the class teachers to focus their attention on a smaller number of children in their lessons. Mrs Lucas will work with Year 4 and Year 6 next week, then Year 3 and Year 5, and so on.

(3) Contingency Plan for Remote Learning

We have posted our Contingency Plan for Remote Learning on our school website. It can be accessed via this link:

https://www.busbridge-junior.surrey.sch.uk/web/learning_resources_for_your_child_including_home_learning/390419

Finally, we are aware that for many of our families this an anxious time on a number of levels. We try to keep school life as 'normal' as possible for our children to help them with their mental health and anxiety levels, but inevitably our COVID processes and procedure are far from being 'normal'. This, alongside lockdown, may lead our children to worry more in the coming weeks. Please do keep in touch with us if you have any concerns.



Richard Catchpole (Headteacher)

