



Challenge, Equality & Opportunity

Friday 22nd January 2021

Updates and Information

Live Online Zoom Sessions for R – Y4

It has been lovely for staff to see and interact with the children at home this week. After a few technical hitches, most people who were invited were able to attend. If you tried and couldn't join in, please let us know as we will try and make sure that you can join in next time. We have seen teddy bears, well-being boxes and shared jokes, amongst other fun activities. Thank you for your support, and in some cases, your patience with the technical difficulties!



Children of Critical Workers

This week, the DfE has reported that there are 20% of primary aged children attending school. However, at Broadway East, we are now up to 36%. Last week, I asked you to consider whether your children needed to be in school. The guidance is quite clear now in stating that children of critical workers should be at home if parents are working from home. I appreciate that some of you are working from home but cannot safely supervise your children because the nature of your work is highly confidential (eg attending virtual live court hearings or child protection conferences) and therefore you cannot safely supervise your children. However, if you are able to work from home while keeping your children safe, then you should have your children at home with you. We know that working with children at home is very challenging but this is not sufficient reason to have your children in school. As well as the numbers already being high, we are still receiving requests for places where parents and carers have been assigned to deliver the vaccination programme or to work additional shifts in an NHS role to cover for staff who are self-isolating. We cannot turn these families away and so we need to create some additional capacity if at all possible. If your child/children is currently attending and you can look after them safely at home, please let us know immediately so that we can adjust our plans. It might be that your children are

currently in full time and you can reduce this to part time, this too would help us enormously.

We are also concerned about the number of children in school who are telling us that they have spent time with other children or non-household members when they have not been in school. It is essential that everyone follows the lockdown rules/guidance so that we reduce the chance of transmission. Please try to support school and the wider community by 'keeping going' with the measures in place. Thank you for your support.

Staff Testing

Up to one in three people who have COVID-19, have it without symptoms and so could be spreading the disease to others unknowingly. Therefore, from Monday 25th January the Department for Education is introducing asymptomatic testing for all staff working in schools. These tests will be carried out twice weekly at home so that any members of staff who may be carrying the virus can be identified.

We are going to be doing our tests on Sundays and Wednesdays, or on Mondays and Thursdays. Any staff who receive a positive result will be required to self-isolate, as will their current class/bubble in school. We will get this information to you as soon as we are able to but unfortunately, as the guidance is to carry out the tests in the mornings, this could be on the same day as the isolation has to start.

While this is worrying and potentially disruptive, we are hopeful that it will reduce the risk of transmission in school and make us all safer. While the numbers in Newcastle are better than the national picture, they are still considered to be very high and we are aware of lots of cases in and around the Gosforth community so every measure which we can take is beneficial.

PE with Joe

Mrs McMillan is a great fan of Joe Wicks and has been encouraging KS1 children at home to get dressed up on a Friday and take part in the online workout. So many of you did it this week, that Mr Burnett and I will be taking part in school (in some form of fancy dress!) next Friday and Mrs McMillan is going to share pictures (she says film, but we are hoping to talk her out of that) with you all! This is a long way out of our comfort zone, but as you've all worked so hard at home, it's only fair that we do our part!



Socks!

There is a Broadway East sock shortage! If your children are currently attending school and you have some socks which your children have outgrown or some socks which might have

come from school, please do send them in so that children can change their socks if they get wet feet when outside. We will quarantine anything which you send in before we put it away or give to any children. Thank you.

Finally, I hope that you all have a good weekend and manage some time to rest or some time to be active, whichever you need most! Those of you at home are doing an amazing job in supporting your children, keeping them safe and managing the home learning activities. For most of you, this is alongside working from home which is a huge achievement! I hope that you are all well and that we can soon start counting down the weeks until we can see everyone again. Fingers crossed!

Take care and stay safe.

Helen McKenna

Headteacher