



Challenge, Equality & Opportunity

News and Information from School

Children in Need

Many thanks to everyone for your generosity and support for Children in Need this year. Our very spotty non-uniform day raised £294! Every penny will be forwarded to Children in Need and will support all of their very worthwhile charities. Well done!

PTFA AGM

Thanks to everyone who attended the first remote PTFA AGM on Monday. It was good to see some new faces (on screen!) and to think ahead to some of the things we might be able to do this year. Huge thanks to Mrs McLannahan who has stepped down from co-chair after a year of hard work and also to the committee members who are staying on. We are currently ordering more new iPads which will be funded by money raised by the PTFA – and will be very well used right across school. Thank you!



Picking up Children from School

Please remember that as soon as you have picked up your children from school, you should leave the site straight away. Parents, carers and children should not be delaying their exit from the site in order to have a chat or allow their children to play together on the yard, but should be minimising the amount of time they spend on site. If the person who picks up your child will not be reading this letter, please pass this information on. Thank you for your support.

School Backpacks and Bags



Thank you to Joel in Class 5 for drawing our attention to the topic of whether children are allowed to bring backpacks to school, or not. Here is the answer, Joel:
We aren't encouraging children to bring anything additional and unnecessary to school. However, if a backpack is useful for carrying a packed lunch and/or your reading book, then you are now allowed to bring one. Please don't bring other items which you don't need in school. Thank you.

KS2 Snacks

KS2 are allowed to bring in snacks from home to have at playtime. Please remember that this should be a healthy snack such as fruit. Children should not be bringing any confectionery, cakes or biscuits.



Impact of COVID-19 on Staffing Levels

We found ourselves in the unfortunate position of having no kitchen staff at the end of last week as they all had to self-isolate due to being close contacts of a positive case. Thank you to the catering team who managed to staff the kitchen for us and keep the school meal provision going. We also have a member of the cleaning team absent from work and so Mr Brown is covering cleaning work for us too. Mrs Wingate has also had to self-isolate after being a close contact with a positive case and so Mr Corbishley has been covering some of her work and she has been working remotely from home with some pupils in school. We have also had absences with our midday supervisory assistants this week and so Mrs Whatnell, Mrs Bigg and Mrs Whyte have been helping out with lunchtimes. Never before have we relied so much on teamwork and everyone helping out! These are really difficult times right across the city in many schools, not just ours. As numbers rise in the community, this is having a huge impact on school staffing as well as services and how they are run. We are very grateful to our staff team for working cooperatively and keeping everything going and to you for your patience and cooperation with the arrangements which we have put in place.

Please remember that, in line with Public Health advice, we will inform you every time that there is a positive case in school, whether there is action for you to take or not. We won't inform you every time there is a staff absence due to being a close contact.

Christmas (is not Cancelled!)

We all know that Christmas is going to be 'different' this year and so staff have been thinking about how we can still make it a special time for the children in school. Some of the things we will be doing are:

- A special mini Reception nativity recorded outdoors and shared with families
- A Reindeer Run outside for all children with outdoor singing and some film footage to share with families
- A party for each class with games and dancing outdoors and a Christmas snack indoors
- Each class will have a decorated Christmas window for you all to see when you come onto the school site
- Cards and calendars to bring home as usual (after the necessary quarantine period in school)
- A Christmas movie afternoon for each class
- The usual BEFS kindness advent calendar
- A fundraising initiative with the Book Trust
- A food collection point for a local food bank
- A special in-school advent calendar with a pre-recorded surprise each day for each class
- PTFA are also planning a lovely treat for each class, details to follow when confirmed!

We will share more details with you as necessary but we thought it would be reassuring to let you all know that we are working hard and planning ahead to make sure that we still manage to have a special Christmas in school!

COVID-19 Symptom Checker

We have attached the latest COVID-19 symptom checker for your information. We have also saved translations of this information on the school website.

Seesaw and Tapestry

We are very impressed with how well our children and families are using Tapestry (in Reception) and Seesaw (in Y1-Y4). Homework, spelling and other tasks are being done to a very high standard and on time – well done to the children and thank you to you all for your support.

FSM Provision

You might be aware from the media that there will be a Christmas holiday voucher scheme available to families with benefits related FSM entitlement. All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 receive the Universal Free School Meal offer, however, you may also be entitled to benefits related FSM and be eligible to receive vouchers over the school holiday period. If you think that you might be entitled then please visit www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/schools-learning-and-childcare/help-school-and-learning-costs/apply-free-school-meals to find out more and to apply.

I hope that you all have a lovely weekend. Please remember follow the current guidance/restrictions in order to keep everyone safe and to help us to keep school open and running for everyone. Also, remember that we are here to answer questions and to support you in any way that we can. Thank you.

Best wishes
Helen McKenna
Headteacher