



DILTON MARSH C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newsletter 1 Term 3 - Monday 11th January 2021

Dear parents and carers

What an interesting start to the term - certainly not what we were planning for just a week ago. We all, teachers, parents and children, have learnt so much over the last week. I am so pleased that 97% of our children attended school last week either in person, as a Critical Worker child, or remotely. We have been able to reach this point thanks to the tireless efforts of staff in preparing and improving our systems whilst adapting to ever-changing circumstances and parents in arranging their days to ensure that children can attend their live lessons.

What is clear from this past week, however, is that the number of pupils eligible to attend school under the critical worker provision is much higher than during the first lockdown. We therefore need to ensure that we can accommodate those most in need whilst recognising that we must continue to do everything that we can to keep staff and pupils as safe as possible in school in light of recent Coronavirus developments.

As I am sure you will understand, running a dual system of educating and supervising children in school whilst providing remote learning to those children at home places an additional logistical staffing burden on the school as teachers are deployed to online teaching whilst staff are still required in the classrooms for those being educated in school. The extremely rapid rate of transmission of the virus at the moment means that we must do everything we can to protect our school community: pupils, parents and staff alike.

The guidance from the Department for Education was updated over the weekend reiterating that whilst children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school if required, parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home wherever possible to keep them safe.

We must stress that places in school for critical worker children are finite and we ask that you only take up a place if absolutely necessary. As a community we must ensure that there is space for our healthcare workers' children and other vital roles that are actively helping to fight the pandemic. Many of our critical workers, particularly hospital and frontline medical staff, will be working additional hours and covering multiple shifts and we want to ensure that we prioritise those with the most urgent need.

Accordingly, we are now asking you to review your needs and consider only sending your child to school if it is absolutely necessary in order to carry out your critical worker role. We may need to ask parents/carers to provide individual evidence of their critical worker status using the published guidance. Parents should discuss any continuing difficulties with their own employer's HR department.

It is our desire to accommodate parents' needs as far as possible whilst keeping children and staff in school safe but, just like other schools, we are balancing difficult priorities. While we have carried out all the required risk assessments and put the relevant procedures in place to keep school safe, we recognise that younger children in particular find it very difficult, if not impossible, to maintain social distancing. For this reason, if we can find ways to reduce the number of children in school on any day this would reduce even further the risk of spreading infection.

Thank you in advance for your help and support in this matter.

Jill Hibbs
Headteacher

Storytelling Competition Time

We are excited to be introducing our Storytelling Competition again this year. Watch Mr Foyle introduce this on our [school website](#).



*Dilton Marsh
Storytelling
Competition*

Video you and your family telling me your favourite story! Tell it in the best way you can. You can act it, sing it or even use funny voices. You might dress up to make your story even more realistic!

Due: Friday 15th January
Send to: oa@DiltonMarsh.wilts.sch.uk

Winners will be announced in the newsletter the following week and prizes are on offer! For every parent that we see in a video performing, there will be 5 house points given to your child. We look forward to seeing all your wonderful videos!

Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub

With national lockdown measures now in place, Wiltshire Council's Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub is still available to anyone who is struggling during this difficult time - and will now be available on Saturdays.

The hub can help and provide support to those who perhaps don't have a network around them, and also signpost them to where additional help is available in their local area. Hundreds of community groups, run by volunteers, are still set up across the county, providing invaluable assistance to those who need it.

Anyone can access the hub, particularly people who are self-isolating, people who do not have others to support them, and have been identified as clinically extremely vulnerable and are shielding.

People can get in touch with the hub via email at wellbeinghub@wiltshire.gov.uk or by calling 0300 003 4576. It's available from 9am-5pm Monday-Friday and 10am-4pm on Saturdays.



The Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub
For people in need of support
0300 003 4576
wellbeinghub@wiltshire.gov.uk
#WiltshireTogether
Wiltshire Council

Reminder - Primary School Admissions September 2021

Will your child be four years old before September 2021?

You must apply for a Primary School place by midnight on 15th January 2021. [Apply online to Wiltshire Council](#).