

Subject: Newsletter, 10 September 2020

Date sent: 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020, 1:47pm

## Cheddington Combined School

Dear Parents,

I would like to begin the first 'newsletter' of the term by formally welcoming you all back to the next new normal. The children have settled amazingly well into their classes and are really enjoying the Good to be Us activities this week. As most of you will be aware this is always the way we start the academic year – activities which focus on well-being, keeping safe physically and virtually, healthy eating and healthy lifestyles, as well as study skills and classroom routines. The positive buzz in the school is so good to see.

From next Monday we will be moving towards having a full curriculum in place by the end of September. For at least the next two weeks, classes (other than YR) will be having an orientation period with a strong focus on English and Maths. They will also be working in Science, PE, PHSE and one other subject which will vary depending on the class. This is to ensure that the children have a sound understanding of the core basics on which their future learning can be built, and to give the teachers a clear understanding of any 'gaps' the children may have. As we move into full curriculum, we are sadly unable to offer the Curriculum Enrichment mixed year group sessions which we have always valued highly. This is not possible at present due to the Covid-19 restrictions needed to keep us all as safe as possible. Instead we are going to use that weekly session as Knowledge Enrichment, allowing all the children to cover the knowledge learning in history, geography, RE and science topics which they missed in the summer term of last year. We all have our fingers crossed that as the school year moves on we may be able to offer Curriculum Enrichment in some form before the end of the year.

As the classrooms are set up according to the Department for Education Guidance for Schools, space is quite tight. We are not able to allow use of the lockers other than for the storage of PE kits, in order to minimise corridor congestion points. Therefore, the children will be storing their bags under their chairs in the classroom during the

school day. This has the potential to be a Health and Safety issue if the bags are too big to fit! Please could we request that the child's bag is kept to the minimum size needed for them to carry their reading books etc, and with only one key-ring/attachment. Whilst I completely understand the children's fascination for having multiple items hanging from their bags, at this time one only is safer and appropriate.

The children are again using the trolleys for their lunch-boxes, and have been taught to place them carefully so that no other child or adult should be handling their box. We have worked with AIP so that the lunches ordered for the children now contain a drink. Should you be providing a lunch from home, please ensure that it contains a drink for your child as classroom water bottles are not taken to the canteen. Please can all parents ensure that the children can self-manage the items in their lunch box, as the current requirements make it inadvisable for an adult to be touching the child's belongings except in an emergency.

Thank you to you also for your understanding of the time windows, and the requirement for adults dropping off or collecting children to maintain social distance. Mr Frankum is on crossing patrol for the extended times. I have today reminded the older children who arrive and leave independently to ensure that they do walk along and cross with him. I appreciate that for families coming from New Street this may seem a diversion when you will be progressing to Church Lane, but it is unsafe to cross at that junction, especially with the increasing traffic through the village and the return of the secondary school transports.

I do hope you all were able to note the information sent out on Monday regarding the key symptoms of the virus and the actions to take should your child show them. At present on the front page of our website is a 'Returning to school in September' flowchart which I am keeping updated as the regulations change. (A challenging task!) We are hoping in the coming days to make a new page on the parent tab which will be a reference point for you on matters Covid-19 related. In the meantime, I would like to share with you some links to official guidance documents:

Specific guidance of what to look for in children:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children/>

To request a test:

<https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/antigen/name>

To register your test:

<https://test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/register-kit>

Should symptoms worsen rapidly:

<https://111.nhs.uk/COVID-19>

A video showing how to administer the test:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xaw8DsF2lqc>

You will receive electronically later today the Curriculum Newsletter for your child. In the current scenario we have made the decision to send these out in this way rather than the traditional hard copy. We are sure you will find them as informative as usual.

Prior to the summer I send out a questionnaire regarding access to IT at home, so that we can look at the most equitable options for provision of learning at home activities when the need arises. Many parents kindly returned these, but in order to have the fullest picture possible I am attaching it again to this letter should you have not yet had time to complete it. I would be very grateful if our new parents for children in YR could also complete one. There will be a box on the playground for your returns. Thank you.

We will be sending out a Parent Calendar in the coming weeks – it is inevitably much slimmer than in previous years, but we hope it will be helpful.

This has been quite a missive this week, thank you for noting the information. We look forward to a great term with the children. Please do contact us if you have any concerns. I hope you have a good weekend and enjoy the sunshine.

Mrs K. Tamlyn

Head Teacher