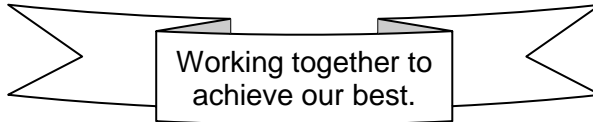




Newsletter

Issue No.1
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Chair of Governors: Gareth Jones

Governors: Adam Campbell, Fran Sherry, Jon Wilson, Louise Haigh, Jason Hart, Annette Anderson, Jason Manley, John Ashley and Joanna Milne

Dear parents/carers,

Return to regular newsletters

Now that we are fully open again, we have decided to return to our normal newsletter format. As these are unusual times however and we want a regular / frequent way to update you and keep you informed, these newsletters will be weekly this term, rather than fortnightly.

A huge well done to all our children!

We have all been so impressed with the way all the children have come into school and participated in their learning this week. It has been lovely to see all the smiles on their faces and the enthusiasm with which they have set about getting stuck into their work in school. They are a credit to all of you; we are very proud of them and more importantly, they should feel very proud of themselves!

Changes to Pick up and Drop off Arrangements

We are very grateful for the very positive feedback we have had from parents. Staff have worked incredibly hard over the summer to prepare the school and make it as safe as we possible can for everyone and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many parents who have expressed their thanks and support as this has meant a great deal to us.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank parents for reporting any concerns or issues. We have tried to respond rapidly to these and it has enabled us to make/plan improvements during the course of this first week back.

Year 4

We became aware of difficulties surrounding the pick up and drop off for children in Y4 on the first day back and made alterations to improve the process. We have had a lot of positive feedback that these changes have significantly improved safety and the experience of parents/carers and children.

Station Road entrance and Elm Class

We are aware that there are difficulties for parents/carers using the station road entrance, especially around 9:00 when two classes are entering at once.

For this reason we have decided that from **Monday 14th** we will change the time and location for the Elm class drop off / pick up. From Monday we are asking that the **Elm class children are picked up and dropped off using the Y4 entrance** in the car park/service road. The times will change to **9:15 (drop off) and 3:30 (pick up)**. We apologise for any inconvenience caused to Elm class parents but we hope that this will help to ease the congestion / safety issues, currently causing concerns for those using the Station Road gate.

We would also like to remind you that it is **essential** that once you have picked up / dropped off your children you please leave the site/area around the school ASAP, so we can all work together, to ease the congestion as much as possible, in order to keep everyone safe. Thank you for your support.

Other Coronavirus Provision Updates

Hand gel - Many children are bringing in their own hand gel and this has proved really helpful in speeding up the handwashing that is a very important but obviously time consuming process. We would like to ask that if parents/carers could support us by sending hand gel (with your child's name on, we would be very grateful!

Updated Guidance from DfE

'Self-isolate if you have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), or if anyone in your household develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)'. This guidance was updated on 10th September and we will be updating our website to reflect this. The new guidance means that if we ask you to pick up your child because they seem to have one or more of the symptoms set out by the Government, we would also ask you to pick up any sibling.

Book bags - As children begin to take reading books / letters etc. to and from school, it would be very useful if all children had a book bag. These are available for purchase from the school office. Thank you.

Virtual Assemblies - Following Government guidance we are not all meeting together in the hall for assemblies but we do not want children to miss the opportunity to experience assemblies altogether. From Monday, children Y1-Y4 will be taking part in two assemblies a week. One will be a pre-recorded Values assembly (children will have a chance to participate, facilitated by their teacher). The second will be a 'live' merit assembly on a Friday using Google Meet with all the children taking part and receiving merits in their classrooms.

Welcome Letters and 'What are We Learning' sheets

With this newsletter you will also have received the Welcome letter for your child's year group and the What Are We Learning? sheet. We have updated the WAWL? Sheet to include more information concerning the knowledge and skills children will be covering, with some ideas about how to help your child at home. The only proviso, in connection with the strange events this year, is that with the need for more revision of previous content than normal, it is possible that the children might not cover as much as they normally would.

The Welcome letters give you lots of information that will, hopefully be helpful, including the email contact for your child's teacher. With the restrictions on face to face contact we realise this email contact will be even more important. It is important to look after staff well being however and so I should perhaps add the reminder that our policy is that emails from parents/carers will be responded to within 36 hours in the working week.

The letters also tell you what day your child will be doing PE. This will be useful to know as **on those days we want the children to come into school in their PE kit**. For convenience, this information is also set out below:

Days children will need to wear their PE kit to school	
Year 1	Holly - Tuesday and Friday Maple - Thursday and Friday

Year 2	<p>Beech - Wednesday and Friday</p> <p>Cedar - Monday and Wednesday</p>
Year 3	<p>Elm - Monday and Thursday</p> <p>Hazel -Thursday and Friday.</p>
Year 4	<p>Willow - Tuesday and Wednesday.</p> <p>Oak - Tuesday and Thursday.</p>

Reading at home

We are currently re-assessing all the children who were on the RWI programme at the end of last academic year. We are getting through these assessments as quickly as we can but it will take a couple of weeks to complete this process.

In the meantime, we want to get children reading at home again next week and we will base the books they take on the colour they were on prior to lockdown. The way this happens will be slightly different across the school.

Year 1 and Year 2

We will be asking Y1 and Y2 parents/carers to begin to select / change their child's books again from **Tuesday 15th**, in a similar way to the system last year. There will be a gazebo out in the front of the school, set up across the dividing fence, in the middle of the courtyard. It will give access to the reading books, so parents can change them. (Please follow guidance on social distance signs that will be present).

Reading books will be available to select in boxes for each colour on **either Tuesdays or Fridays** at drop off and pick up times. The idea is to keep the books for a week, which will give you and your child the important opportunity to re-read the text a few times, to build fluency and develop comprehension skills. The used books, which will be left in the 'Returned Books Box' for 72 hours, as a Covid 19 precaution, before being made available for use again.

We are asking parents to take **no more than 2 books** as the system will place more of a strain on our resources. (please do not take more books as we will then not have enough!!)

On Monday 14th, we will send home another copy of the Reading Record Sheet, in case you have misplaced the one your child was using last year. This will guide you in what books / colour to select.

Signage in the Gazebo will direct you to use hand gel to sanitize your hands before selecting the new books.

If your child attends Kids' Club on both Tuesdays and Fridays, please email the class teacher, who will then change the books for you on one of these days.

Please be aware that during this time away from school it is quite possible (and expected) that assessments might reveal that some children have forgotten some of the sounds and might need to consolidate their skills, reading some books from a previous colour to restore confidence. If that turns out to be the case for your child, please don't worry about it, working together, we will help them catch up again!

Year 3 and Year 4

As last year, we will be expecting children in Y3 and Y4 to change their own books and staff will give them reminders and guidance about this. Children will select books to take home from next week and can return them / select them once a week. The day this happens will be determined by their teacher and this information will be in your Welcome Letter.

Opportunities to practise spellings at home

We are currently reviewing children's spelling and are in the process of introducing a new spelling system Y1-Y4. We do however want children to have the opportunity to work on developing their spelling at home and we feel that they would all benefit from working on the common exception words that are part of the National Curriculum.

As mentioned above in the section on reading, we fully expect that children will need to revise / revisit previous learning due to their absence from school and so we advise parents to look at the Common Exception word list from the previous year. (i.e. if your child is in Y3, look at the Y2 list etc.)

The word lists are included with this newsletter to make it easier for parents. They are also available to download on our website.(See Year group page under the 'Our Learning' tab).

The best way to approach using these lists would be:

- Work on a few words at a time - perhaps 6
- Talk about the words and their meaning
- Practise writing them down.
- Use the 'look, cover, write, check' approach
- Try to make it fun!
- When children know those words, keep 2 of them and add 4 new ones and repeat the process!

It has been lovely seeing all the children back in school and as I said at the beginning of the newsletter, they have settled in so well. We needed to get a lot of information in this newsletter but next week we hope to share some pictures with you so you get a feel for the children's experiences in school.

Thank you to everyone once again, for your patience and support, which we greatly appreciate.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely,

