

Newsletter 4 March 2021

Dear Parents and carers,

We usually send our newsletters digitally but as we were posting out other materials to you, we thought we would get our money's worth from our stamp and send you this term's newsletter too, then we know you all have the most up to date information for the coming weeks. Please keep this newsletter safe so you can refer back to it when needed.

### **Returning to school**

On March 8<sup>th</sup> we will see all of our children returning to school after, what seems like, a long period of time. We have planned to make the transition back to school as smooth as possible by not making too many changes to when we returned in September.

### **Breakfast Club**

We will no longer restrict access to Breakfast club to just key worker or vulnerable pupils and will open it all pupils from Reception to Year 6. However, we can only accommodate 16 pupils from each bubble in order to keep children safely spaced apart and so the places will be allocated on a first come first served basis, using a booking form, which I have posted on Class Dojo.

### **Dropping Off**

When we trialled the staggered start, there was much confusion and it didn't help parents who had to drop off and get to work in time, so we gradually changed to having a drop off window where any age child can come to school. Our gates will open at **8.45am and close at 9.00am** giving a 15 minute window to come into school. As before, children will go straight into their classrooms and not mix on the yard.

It is very important that children are in school for 9am so that they do not miss the start of the first lesson as teachers always start lessons promptly. If you arrive after 9.00am, from the 8<sup>th</sup> March you will be asked to come into school and log the late arrival on our digital Invenry system. Only 1 parent may enter and they must be wearing a face mask and must santatise their hands before they touch the Invenry screen. The Invenry system records the time of arrival and the reason for lateness.

### **Picking up**

The pick-up system we had before Christmas worked really well, so we will continue with this from March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Bubble 1: Pick up from hall doors at 3.10pm

Bubble 2: pick up from hall doors at 3.15pm

Bubble 3: pick up from hall doors at 3.20pm

Parents and carers with multiple siblings: 3.15pm from the yard.

Please can we ask that parents line up, 2 metres apart, in the car park and not stand in front of the gates as this causes a bottle neck. Thank you

Parents and carers of nursery children to collect from the hall doors at lunchtime 11.45am and from the nursery gate in the playground at 3.10am or 3.15am if you have other siblings.

**All parents and carers MUST wear a mask when crossing the school gate.**

### **After school clubs**

The government has given us the green light to restart our after-school clubs with the brief that they must include sports and recreation. This will help children get more active and learn how to play with their peers again after spending so much time indoors. We have devised a rota of activities which we think hits that brief perfectly. However, as we still have to have clubs in bubbles, we are limited to how many staff we can have running the clubs and by the spaces we have to keep bubbles separated and so are unable to provide clubs for every age, every day. We think that what we are offering though is still better than none at all. Again, an online form will be sent out for you to sign up on a first come, first served basis. Hopefully, by the time the summer comes we can begin to open our doors to a wider range of activities every day for all.

### **Keeping COVID safe**

As before, we will continue to keep the school COVID safe by increasing the cleaning of touch points, additional hand washing and sanitising, keeping bubbles apart, staff wearing masks in corridors and now all staff will be taking a Lateral Flow Test twice weekly to identify asymptomatic cases.

I would ask parents that they too continue to be COVID safe outside of school, as restrictions are still in place and that means no car sharing, going to friends' houses for tea, parties or sleepovers. Let's all pull together as a community for one last push so we can hopefully have a summer of fun and freedom!

### **COVID Symptoms**

If your child displays any of the following symptoms, the same rules apply: you must not bring your child to school and you must book a test. Everyone in your household must isolate until you get the test result.

1. A high temperature
2. A new continuous cough
3. Loss of taste or smell

If your child has to isolate because they or someone in your household has symptoms or has tested positive, we will endeavour to provide remote learning for your child, although it will slightly differ to what they have received during lockdown as teachers will be in school teaching during the day, so please bare with us when awaiting work on Class Dojo.

### **Attendance**

The Department for Education has stressed, and made clear, that attendance must be a priority for children in school, now more than ever for obvious reasons, and so from 8<sup>th</sup> March we will be contacting parents of pupils who may have slipped under 92% or had a high number of broken weeks (when a child is having numerous "odd days off") during the Autumn term, to discuss any barriers to coming to school this term, and offer support where needed. These particular children will need medical evidence as proof of illness for an absence to be authorised. Holidays will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.

I am confident that we will have fantastic attendance this year, given that parents are very eager to get their children back to school and to have a well-deserved break!

## **Uniform**

Children should come back to school in their uniform and wear PE kit on their PE days: teachers will share with you, which days these are on Class Dojo. PE kit should be trainers, plain black tracksuit bottoms, yellow T-shirt and either a black hoodie or blue school jumper over the top. Classrooms will still be well ventilated, with windows open so children may bring an extra jumper to wear over the top in class if you wish.

## **Happy News**

It's always nice to hear some happy news these days and we have a double dose! Both Mrs Heslop and Miss Hez are expecting their first baby! I am sure you will join me in congratulating the two families. Mrs Heslop is already past 28 weeks and so has been advised to shield until baby arrives and will therefore be working from home until her maternity leave. Miss Hez will return on 8<sup>th</sup> March and then will shield and work from home after the Easter holidays. Mrs Harper, who has worked in school before, will be covering Miss Hez for the Summer term.

We also have Mrs Richards shielding, hopefully only until 31<sup>st</sup> March, which means for the three weeks before the Easter holidays, we are going to trail virtual teaching in the classroom. The children will be supervised by Miss Clare and Miss Jarvis and Mrs Richards will teach the children on the big screen during live lessons throughout the day.

## **SATS and Assessments**

You may have heard that this year Statutory Assessment Tests in Years 2 and 6 will not be going ahead this year due to COVID. Teachers will still be assessing pupils at the end of this term to find out if there are any gaps in learning and if any children need any additional catch-up support in school.

## **Forest schools**

We will be continuing our Forest School adventures as soon as we return. The programme helps children learn in the great outdoors about the environment they live in. They learn life skills such as team work, resilience and problem solving. From **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March, Reception** and our **afternoon Nursery** children will be starting so children must come to school in warm outdoor clothing, all day and make sure they have their wellies in school too. Children will wear outdoor cover suits over the top of their clothes for added warmth and so they can get as muddy as they want!

## **That Bread and Butter Thing**

I am pleased to announce that we will be launching That Bread and Butter Thing on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March, (last day of term,) and St Andrew's will be the flagship Bishop Auckland Hub for the community project. I have enclosed a flier to tell you all about it. The project aims to reduce food waste. Each week you pay £7.50 for one bag each of fresh fruit and veg, store cupboard and chilled foods from a range of suppliers e.g., M and S, Waitrose, Sainsbury's etc which can amount to around £45. As we are the flagship hub, your first bag of food is completely free so you can get a taste of what is on offer. Instructions on how to become a member are on the flier enclosed and shopping bags can be collected from the school car park from 3pm until 3.30pm every Friday – even during the holidays.

### **Dogs in School**

Please can we ask that parents and carers do not bring their dogs onto the school premises, there is a sign on our gate notifying you that there could be a £50 fine incurred- this also applies if you are carrying your dog. Our school dog, Sammy the Spaniel, has had a full temperament assessment by a qualified dog behaviourist which allows him to come into school. Sammy spends time with the children in school, helping them learn about responsibility, he comforts children who may be having a challenging day and even listens to them read. It is a pleasure to see the children's faces light up when he visits their classrooms.

### **World book Day**

It is World Book day on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March – sadly we can't all be in school and dressing up as our favourite characters, (although I think some parents may be relieved about this,) but we will be setting a story corner/den task for children to do at home. We have enclosed a book voucher for your children to spend on a book to enjoy at home and a sheet to enter a competition to win a book bundle. This must be completed and brought into school on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March and we will send them off to be judged. Enjoy!

We can't wait to see you all again from the 8<sup>th</sup> March!

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs James

Headteacher

### **Holiday Dates for your Diary**

March 26<sup>th</sup> - School closes for Easter Holidays

April 12<sup>th</sup> - School reopens to all children

May 3<sup>rd</sup> - Bank Holiday Monday – School closed

May 28<sup>th</sup> - School closes for May half term

June 7<sup>th</sup> - School Reopens to all children

June 18<sup>th</sup> - Staff INSET day – school closed for children

July 20<sup>th</sup> - School closes for the Summer Holidays