12th February 2021

Newsletter No. 21   2020~2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you will be aware, the school will be completely closed next week for the half-term break and will reopen again for the children of key workers on 22nd February. We would like to update you about a few issues at the end of this exceptional half-term.

Announcement
At present, we are looking forward to the announcement by the Prime Minister on 22nd February which might provide details about when schools might reopen. There has been speculation about 8th March, however, we will have to wait and see. Schools receive no prior notification of what the Prime Minister might say and so, at the moment, we plan ahead for several different possible eventualities.
We need to prepare for:
- the current situation to continue indefinitely
- schools to open to certain year groups from 8th March
- schools to open to all year groups from 8th March
- school attendance to be compulsory or optional
- bubble size in school to be limited or unlimited
- remote learning to continue or cease throughout any of the possible scenarios
Within the above list of possibilities there are additional unknown factors that can have significant implications – I won't bore you with all of these.
Of course, we will share the details of our provision as soon as we have any further information and, as always, we will work tirelessly to do the best we possibly can. This doesn't mean that every person receives exactly what they would like because there are so many different opinions about the right way forward. We live in interesting times.

Critical Worker Provision
Places for Critical Worker children have now been allocated for 22nd Feb to 5th March and we politely remind you that we are unable to accept last minute changes.

Parents' Evening
With due regard to the above uncertainty, we would like to propose our intention for how we will try and touch base with parents for parents' evenings this term. These plans could change but we have to have a plan. Obviously, these meetings will be very different to the norm when we tell parents about how children are getting on in school. We will provide a structure for the meetings which will take place remotely via MS Teams. Appointment times and specific arrangements will be sent out after half term, which also allows us to hear the announcement on 22nd Feb. It is our intention to hold parents' evening over a two-week period between 1st and 12th March and you will be notified when teachers are holding meetings for different classes.

Microsoft 365
I draw your attention to the letter that was sent out yesterday about setting up all children with Microsoft 365 accounts. This is intended to improve the functionality of MS Teams for children and hopefully reduce further the problems experienced by a small number of families as reported in the parents' survey. Please follow the instructions in the letter carefully.

Yr 4 Refund
I am sorry to report that we are obviously not going to be able to progress with the year 4 residential this term. Parents paid for a residential in year 3 and we amended the booking in the hope of being able to run one in year 4. Parents will receive a full refund and we are currently in the process of reclaiming the funds from the YHA.

LFD
You may remember that I informed you that staff in school have been taking part in twice weekly Lateral Flow Testing. This will continue after the half term holiday.

Thank You
As we reach the end of this exceptional and challenging half term, I would like to thank all the staff, parents and children connected with the school for the massive efforts that have been made. I am aware that so many are ready for a break from remote learning and the immense pressure we have all been under. I think we should we be proud of what we have all done in the hardest of circumstances.

Take care

Yours faithfully,

Pete Taylor
Head Teacher