

Dear Parents and Carers,

June 2021



With just over four weeks of the term to go I thought it was timely to send reminders and information about activities leading up to the end of term.

We continue to be cautious but want to ensure our children get the opportunity to enjoy activities we can do safely, following the government guidance. Don't forget, although other schools may be finishing on Friday 16th July, we don't finish until the end of the day on Tuesday 20th July and all children return to school on Wednesday 1st September for the new academic year.

I can't reinforce enough how careful we need to continue to be. The Delta variant is clearly very contagious and so we all need to continue to ensure that we maintain high standards of cleanliness. The children continue to sanitise and wash their hands on a regular basis at school, we have the additional lunchtime cleaning, staff are wearing masks in the corridors when they move around school and we continue to ask parents to wear masks when on the school grounds (a lanyard if exempt from this) and ask that social distancing is maintained when you leave the school grounds too.

Please do not gather outside the school gates to talk.

The more careful we are, the more chance we have of managing to reduce infection. As a school we may not be able to stop the virus coming in, but we can certainly do all we can to stop the infection being spread.



Please remember, if your child is unwell in any way then please do not send them into school.

If you are in any doubt, ring 119 to ask advice.

If any member of your family has symptoms and is having a test then you must not send any of your children in to school. The whole family must isolate until the result of the test is known.

You have been terrific in working with us throughout the year. It has been a great team effort.

Thanks for your support in helping to keep everyone safe.

Now on to the more pleasant things...

Please read on to find out what we have planned for the rest of the term.

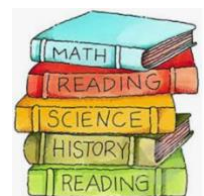
Staffing changes

Parents of children in Y4 (previously Miss Ellis's class) were informed at half term that Miss Forsyth, who had taken over the class in January, was not returning after May half term. The school were given very little notice but have been able to secure an experienced teacher from a local school. Mrs Sant has joined us from Lanchester E. P. Primary. She started straight after half term and will be with us until the end of this term.

We have appointed a new teacher to join our team from September. Mr MacDonald has completed his training with Sunderland University and is looking forward to joining us.

Class Letters

You will receive an email after school ends on Friday informing you of your child's class for next year (all parents except Pre-School as you have already been informed of this). I know the children are usually excited to hear about this but also apprehensive, as many of us are regarding change. Please talk to your child about this. They will be having a transition session the week beginning 5th July when they will have a lesson with their new teacher. (Again Pre-School have a different arrangement for transition and parents have already been informed of this.)



To ensure we do not impact on our bubbles for transition the teacher will wear a visor for this session and will remain at the front of the classroom.

Sadly our Y6 children's transition arrangements have been impacted by the recent government advice. We are waiting to hear from the secondary schools to find out what is going to happen for them.

Pre-School parents have already been formed as to which class their child will be in next year and they have an additional transition session this week.

Parent Questionnaire

Thanks again for completing this for us. We find this very useful feedback. It gives us confirmation for the things that are going well, as well as suggesting aspects of our provision that we might consider adapting.

As in previous years, all the information given has been compiled ready to share with you. Thank you for the many comments of affirmation and for those parents who made suggestions or concerns, we have responded to them in green.

You will have received the whole document with this email. I hope you find time to read this through and find out what others are thinking and saying.

The overwhelming majority recognise what a good school we have and how well supported the children are in their learning.

A summary of the areas we will further consider as a result of the questionnaire are as follows:

- Offer a Parent Meeting for the Summer Term 2021 (already acted upon)
- Signpost parents to the curriculum plans/learning for the year for each year group which are on the website
- Do a separate questionnaire for parents of children who are on the SEN register
- If continuing with a staggered start/end in September - reduce the stagger
- Regularly remind parents about parking outside of school
- Remind parents about keeping siblings with them when waiting for other children
- If a whole bubble has to isolate - offer a combination of tasks and live sessions (which are recorded for parents to access later too)
- Encourage parents to let us know if they are struggling with devices for home learning/remote learning
- Continue to use YouTube to share activities in school if parents cannot be invited
- Resume programme of After School Activities as soon as possible
- Home Learning across all year groups is differentiated where appropriate



Traversing Wall

As we have not had to pay for buses for our Multi-sports and Competition events with Brandon and Langley Moor this year we are going to use some of our Sports Premium funding to go towards a traversing wall for the Lower School yard. Part of this will be installed this week but the hand holds will be fitted ready for September.

It will be an exciting addition to our outdoor play.



Sponsored Bike Ride

An email was sent on Friday to all parents of children from Y2 through to Y6 inviting them to join in the family bike ride next Tuesday, 29th June.

If you are interested in your child taking part in this, please make sure you inform us by completing the form we sent so that we can manage the numbers. As with all events we need to make sure we complete this as safely as possible. Thank you.



Durham Brass

Every year we have enjoyed welcoming a brass band as part of the Durham Brass Festival and I am pleased to say that we will be hosting the Renegade Brass Band on the afternoon of Thursday 15th July.



Sadly we will not be inviting parents in for this but you may well hear them as you head to school to pick your child up. The event will be held outside, regardless of the weather, and we'll ensure the children remain in their bubbles to enjoy this experience.



Sports Day

Following a lengthy discussion with governors about our upcoming Sports Day the decision was made not to invite parents to attend this due to the rise in infection rates.

Governors recognised how well the school community have done this year with regard to the virus and didn't want to take any unnecessary risks.

Sports Day will take place for the children next Wednesday (30th June) as long as the weather is good enough. We will have no more than two year groups on the field at one time and they will be well distanced from the other children.

For Y5 - 5M will take part in races with 56T and 6P but any contact will be brief.

We will record each event in photos and video clips and will share the Sports Days on our YouTube channel. We'll send you the link once this is ready to go live. Thanks for your understanding.

Water Slide

We are planning to do the Water Slide activity for all children on Wednesday 14th July (Tuesday 13th July if the weather is looking poor for the Wednesday). The children will do this in their bubbles and they will get very wet. For parents new to us, we fix a strong plastic sheet on the hillside (near the tree houses) and that, combined with some cold water and washing up, makes a really good slide.

The slide will be timetabled and supervised carefully throughout the day and the children will go in their bubbles with their teacher to enjoy the activity.

To take part they must have a full change of clothing (including underwear), a pair of shoes they can change into which they can get wet and a towel. The children love it.



Educational Visits leading up the end of term

We have 3 visits planned:

Y6 to go to Tees Barrage to take part in bell boating and do the Air Trail (1st July)

Y2 to Whitley Bay (15th July)

Y3 through to Y6 to walk from Craster to Embleton and enjoy some time on the beach (19th July)

We have sought guidance for these visits to ensure our risk assessments comply with government guidelines.

The children will travel in their bubbles on the bus. We will have no mixing of bubbles on transport.

However we will still be asking all children to wear a mask whilst on the bus and the staff will have a bus plan so that they know exactly where each child was sitting.

Once the buses arrive at the venue then the children will be outside. This is straight forward for Y2 and Y6 as they are not different bubbles.

For the Craster visit for Y3 to Y6 the children will start walking in their bubbles and will have lunch within their bubbles, albeit outside all the time.

When they take part in the games we will actively encourage the children to play in their bubbles but, given the nature of the day, they may cross bubbles whilst outside.

The children always have a lovely time and we feel that through the precautions we have taken we will have minimised the risk as much as possible.



Y2 and Y6 End of Year Assemblies

Y2 Moving on

Traditionally we have a Moving On assembly for Y2 as they get ready to move into Key Stage 2. This year the children are going to put together a presentation of their memories. This will be recorded and we will share it with you on our YouTube channel.

Y6 Leavers' Assembly

The children will prepare a presentation for their parents and we are hoping to be able to invite Y6 parents (1 adult per family) in to school to share this assembly with the children on Friday 16th July.

We will split the children into two halves and use both of the school halls to reduce the number of adults in one area. We did the Leavers' Assembly in a similar way last year and it worked well.

Y6 Leavers' Meal

We are not able to hold the traditional Y6 meal out at the Hill Top this year due to restricted numbers for groups.

Instead we are going to hold this at school. We'll have our own 'Tanfield Take Away', ordering pizzas for tea as well as laying on a few fun activities for the children to enjoy together.

You'll receive more information on this soon but we plan for this to take place from 4:30 until 6 on Monday 12th July.

End of Year Reports

Staff are in the process of writing these now. As stated in previous newsletters, they will be emailed to all parents on Monday 19th July.

We continue to operate in a different way but are endeavouring to offer children as many of the same experiences as possible.

As I said at the start of the letter, if we can all continue to play our part in helping to keep everyone safe then hopefully we will be able to have a positive end to our academic year.

Many thanks.

Kay Hemmings
Head Teacher

