September 2021

Dear Parents and Friends,

As this is our first newsletter this school year, it is my privilege to welcome you back and give a special welcome to all parents who are new to our school. As always, my door is open so do please speak to me as needed. I am looking forward to continuing our close partnership over the coming year.

Covid 19

The government continues to manage the risk of serious illness from the spread of the virus. Step 4 has marked a new phase in the government’s response to the pandemic, moving away from stringent restrictions on everyone’s day-to-day lives, towards advising people on how to protect themselves and others, alongside targeted interventions to reduce risk. As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people’s education

Risk assessment

We have reviewed and updated our risk assessments – this is now available for you to read on the school website. However, below is a summary of our assessment.

* Mixing and ‘bubbles’

It is no longer recommend that it is necessary to keep children in consistent groups (‘bubbles’). This means that bubbles will not need to be used from the autumn term. This means that assemblies can resume, and we no longer need to make alternative arrangements to avoid mixing at lunch.

* Tracing close contacts and isolation

Close contacts of those testing positive for Covid 19 will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace and school will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing. NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case and/or their parent to identify close contacts. Contacts from a school setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case and/or their parent specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact.

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:

they are fully vaccinated

they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months

they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial

they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so. <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

* Face coverings

Face coverings are no longer advised for pupils, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas.

* Control measures

School will continue to -

1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone.

Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should now be regular practice. You should continue to ensure that pupils clean their hands regularly. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser. The ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach continues to be very important.

1. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes.
2. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

Opening external windows can improve natural ventilation, and in addition, opening internal doors can also assist with creating a throughput of air. If necessary, external opening doors may also be used (if they are not fire doors and where safe to do so). We will balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature.

1. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Children must not be brought in to school if they are unwell. If your child is displaying any signs or symptoms of Covid 19 please keep them at home and get them a full PCR test ( the type that needs to be sent to a laboratory). **If a child needs Paracetamol or Ibuprofen before school then under these circumstances the child would be deemed too unwell for school and should not attend.** This is because medicines such as this can mask the Covid 19 symptom of a raised temperature. If anyone in our school develops COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, they will be sent home and they should follow public health advice.

If a pupil is awaiting collection, they will be left in a room on their own if possible and safe to do so. A window will be opened for fresh air ventilation if possible. Any rooms they use will be cleaned after they have left.

* Asymptomatic testing

Staff will undertake twice weekly home tests whenever they are on site until the end of September, when this will also be reviewed.

* Confirmatory PCR tests

Staff and pupils with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate in line with the stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection. They will also need to get a free PCR test to check if they have COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the individual should continue to self-isolate.

If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and the pupil can return to school, as long as the individual doesn’t have COVID-19 symptoms.

* Attendance

School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is a priority to ensure that as many children as possible regularly attend school.

**Meanwhile – other business!!**

**Newbold Church School – Expectations of Parents**

As we a starting a fresh academic year, hopefully all well rested after a relaxing summer break, I would like to take this opportunity to politely remind you of the school’s expectations that parents will:

* *Support and reflect the school’s ethos and values through their behaviour.*
* *Set a good example to pupils through their behaviour and the way they interact with staff, pupils and other adults.*
* *Work together with staff for the benefit of their child.*
* *Treat all governors, staff members, pupils, other parents and any other individuals connected to the school with dignity and respect.*
* *Work with staff members to resolve any issues of concern.*
* *Where appropriate, clarify their child’s version of events with the school to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.*

**Uniform**Please name all articles of clothing and footwear as we cannot return them to the owners if they are not labelled. If your child persistently comes to school wearing non uniform items then I will be writing to you personally about this. PE kit needs to be worn on PE days – again please ensure that this is named. Teaching staff will be sending out individual welcome letters that detail which days your child will be undertaking PE. Shopuld your child attend a school based sports club, they should also wear their PE kit on that day.

As a reminder, make up, nail varnish and temporary tattoos / transfers are not permitted in school. Any earrings worn need to be small studs. If your child is unable to remove them for PE then the earrings will need to be covered with first aid tape for that lesson please. Headscarves and oversized bows need to be avoided please. It is important that our children take pride in their appearance, and we look forward to your continued support with this.

**Lunchtime -** The cost of school meals has been kept at £2.20 per day- £11 per week. If you would like your child to have school meals on certain set days then this can be accommodated. Please notify the school office of your requirements – these can be changed on a half termly basis. Please can parents pay dinner monies in advance of each week’s lunches using the School Money System – payments therefore are due on a Monday. The school Dinner Money Policy states that should a parent have a dinner money debt that exceeds £10 for a child, a formal letter will be sent informing them to provide their child/children with a packed lunch to prevent further arrears. All schools receive Pupil Premium funding for children entitled to free school meals. Each year the money is used to give specific additional support to these children. Now that all infant children are given a school meal free of charge, it is becoming increasingly difficult to ensure that the children entitled to this support are receiving it. If you receive benefits then you may well be entitled to free school meals (Pupil Premium) so please contact the school office in confidence. It is well worth applying, even though meals are free for infant children, as pupil premium funding makes a huge difference to the individual support that can be offered.

**Water Bottles & snacks -** Children need to bring a small full water bottle filled each day. Children are encouraged to drink regularly to hydrate their brains and take their bottles home each night. This year we will have having a big push on Eco living and as a result will be thinking carefully about the amount of waste plastic that is polluting our seas. You will receive more information about this, but in the meantime we would ask that you try hard to use reusable water bottles, rather than disposable. Children will **ONLY** be served water in the dining room, but will be free to take their bottle with them into the hall when eating lunch.

For children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 a piece of free fruit will be available in school each morning. Other children are welcome to bring a healthy snack such as a cereal bar or fruit for a morning snack. This is the only food that is permitted for morning break and we need your support in sticking to this please.

**The beginning and end of the school day**

**Start of day**

**8.45 – 8.55 – open entry for all children. Gates closed at 8.55. Children classed as Late after 9.05.**

**No parents to accompany children down school path from Y2 – Y6. There will be a member of Y2 staff at EYFS gate to greet Y2 and direct them to their classroom door. Parents with children across EYFS / Y1 and older year groups must ensure that they ONLY accompany the Y1 / EYFS child please.**

**Y1 and Y1 parents to meet class teacher / Teaching assistant in courtyard by outdoor classroom.**

**EYFS to be accompanied by parents to classroom door. (Following transition weeks).**

**End of day**

**3.20 – EYFS parents collect from canopy outside EYFS**

**3.25 – Y1 collect from courtyard**

**3.25 – Y2 collect from infant yard**

**3.25 – Y3 collect from courtyard**

**3.30 – Y4 / Y5 collect from courtyard**

**3.30 – Y6 collect from top of path**

Parents are free to choose whether to wear a face mask when entering the school site, unless local restrictions state otherwise. However, we politely request that parents drop off / collect children swiftly and leave the school site promptly, to avoid large gatherings in small spaces. To keep our children safe it is important that any bikes or scooters are **pushed** down the school path please. Please remember that dogs are not permitted on our school site. This includes dogs that are carried.

* If your child is absent from school, please telephone the school office by 9am. We need this information to come directly from the child’s next of kin. For any children absent without explanation, we will contact you from 9am.
* For infant children, if there is a change to who is collecting your children, please let us know, as we cannot hand over children without your permission.

Safeguarding - The staff and I work extremely hard in school to ensure that your children are kept safe at all times. Please can I ask that if parents are leaving the school site when the main gate is closed ensure that they **DO NOT** hold the gate open for any other visitor to school, but instead close the gate and ask the visitor to buzz the office. It is vital that the staff know who adults are that are entering our building, including friends and parents. I hope you understand the need for me to stress the important NOT to open that gate for anybody to gain entrance to the school site.

Updating details - Don’t forget, if you have any changes to phone numbers, address, email or emergency contact details, it is vital that you let the school office know, so that we contact you in the case of an emergency, and also so you continue to receive regular updates from the school. Thank you.

Further information - You will have also received a list of diary dates for this academic year. These can also be found on the school website at <http://www.newboldchurchschool.co.uk/> alongside a whole host of other useful information. Obviously we hope not to have to make changes to any of these dates, but sometimes this in unavoidable and we will endeavour to let you know as soon as possible.

Please do be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 state that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively. Any requests should be on an official school absence request form and handed into the school office for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made.

Finally, can I take this opportunity to thank all the parents and friends of the school for their continued support. As you already know, my door is always open and should you have any worries or queries (or even just nice things to say!) please do not hesitate to contact me. I try my hardest to stand by the school gate most mornings, so if you want to keep things informal, just grab me for a ‘chat’ then.



Mrs Kerry Marsh

Headteacher