

Friday 8th April 2022

Dear Parents and Friends,

Thank you to our parents and friends who have supported us in so many ways again this half term. Whilst Covid has continued to affect our staff, children and families, I am so proud of the way in which we have battled through and managed to continue to provide a consistent education for the children in our care. This term has seen a continued return to normality, and the children have enjoyed visits to sporting events (Gymnastics, football, waterpolo to name but a few), visitors (including Florence Nightingale) and parents in school and the first School Mass in 2 years! Years 2 and 6 have begun their preparation for the upcoming SATs, Y5 and Y6 have undertaken a residential visit to Whitehall and we all enjoyed world book day, wear a hat day and number day.

Attendance

At Newbold Church School we are committed to promoting and modelling good attendance and behaviour – which is essential for pupils to achieve their potential. Lack of attendance is directly correlated to a pupil's deteriorating success and development in their education. As a parent or carer you have a legal requirement to ensure your child attends school on a regular basis. Therefore, you hold the responsibility to promote good attendance and behaviour. Any parent or carer who has not reported their child absent will be contacted by the school by a phonecall or an email. Failure to inform the school may result in a child receiving an unauthorised absence. I must also state the importance of punctuality with regards to the beginning of the school day. We have returned to our pre-covid policy for lateness. **That means that any child arriving after the school gates have closed at 8.55am will need to enter the school via the main office and will be marked as 'Late'. Anyone arriving after the close of registers at 9.15am will receive an 'Unauthorised absence' mark for the full morning session.**



We have restarted our pre-covid work to aim to improve the attendance rates of the children at NCS. The end of term 'traffic light' letters you will receive via email over the Easter break will give you an indication as to how your child's attendance is looking so far this year. Since September 2015 the Department for Education class any child who has an attendance rate of lower than 90% as a 'persistent absence' and the family may be contacted by one of our school Family Resource Workers to offer help and support in ensuring children are in school.

Having said that, I am aware that we have had an unusually high rate of absence due to winter illnesses this year, and am mindful that children can't help being ill! As such, please can I ask you to approach the traffic light letters with caution if your child has been hit by the cough / cold / tummy bug we seem to have been harbouring. It may be that at this point in the year this absence has caused them to be classed as Red, but once we reach the summer term their averages will improve by the nature of the fact that we will have been in school longer! However, if you receive a persistent absence letter then this does need to be treated seriously, and some consideration given to improving your child's attendance.

Consideration for others

Over the past few months I seem to have been receiving an increased amount of complaints for parents and neighbours about the increased amount of thoughtlessness when parking outside our school at the beginning and end of the school day. Residents from the locality and the school continue to contact the local traffic enforcement officer. The council are have now processed planning for renewed double yellow markings on the junctions around school, which we expect to be installed over the coming weeks. When parking outside school, please be considerate of others. DO NOT block driveways of local residents, and avoid parking on pavements, as this means that those with buggies or using mobility scooters are forced to use the roadway in order to pass. Parking near to or on junctions puts your children at increased danger, as pedestrians cannot see to cross the road safely, and other drivers do not have a clear view of the roadway at the junction.

Uniform

Please note that our uniform code states black shoes and we appreciate your support in this. Socks need to be grey or white only. Sandals can be worn during the summer months, but need to be black, blue or white and must be worn with socks.

Staffing

The children in year 1 will soon be saying a fond farewell and good luck to Miss Hickton, who will be leaving us after the Easter break to have her baby. We are hoping that she will manage to stay with us until Friday 13th May, and during the first 2-3 weeks back to school the children will have an opportunity to get to know their new class teacher – Mrs France! Mrs France is an extremely well experienced teacher, who is already a valued member of our teaching staff, known predominantly for her work in Forest Schools. We are very excited to welcome her as a class teacher, and know that you will enjoy working with her to support your children.

Today we also say thank you and goodbye to Mrs Rowland, who has been working to support children in Y1 and Y2. I'm sure you will join me in wishing her every success in her future adventures.

Contact

I am sure that many parents benefitted from the 'open contact' policy that staff employed during the Covid lockdown, whereby parents were encouraged to contact teachers directly via email. I saw many staff replying to emails late at night and over weekends, understanding that 'normal' expectations were no longer 'normal' during such unusual times. This provision has continued beyond the children returning to school, and staff continue to correspond with parents directly in this way. However, I am mindful that as well as supporting the children, I have a duty of care to my teaching and office staff. I politely request that where possible parents attempt to make contact during working hours. If this is not possible, please be aware that in most cases staff will respond during their own working hours. This may mean that parents have to wait until the following day for a response, or over a weekend. However, we will continue to respond to urgent messages linked to safeguarding or similar.

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 K Marsh

Headteacher