

Friday 5th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I’m very excited to be writing this newsletter focussed on welcoming all the children back to school next week.

However, just before we look forward, I would just like to briefly reflect on the last few weeks. I’m sure you will all agree that this partial closure has felt very different to the last one. The expectations of the remote learning combined with things we learnt from last time have meant that we’ve had far more teaching, learning, assessment and connection taking place. Every single one of us here at Littletown wants to say a huge thank you to all of you for valuing the children’s education through supporting and engaging so well with our remote learning. I know it has been a very hard slog, but I want you to know it really has been worth it. Teachers are so pleased with the progress of so many children.

During this period, teachers have been in regular contact with children and parents throughout. Because this has been so successful, teachers feel they have substantial knowledge of how the children have got on at home so we won’t be asking you to fill in a google form like last time. However, we do know that lots of children and parents may feel some anxiety about coming back to school, being behind etc. Although I hope to reassure you all in this newsletter and have made an assembly for the children about this on the padlets, the class email addresses are still available for you to get in touch with teachers if you need to before Monday. I am also available via email over the weekend head@littletown.devon.sch.uk

As well as thanking parents and children for all their hard work and amazing teaching and learning, I would like to record my thanks to the staff for the last eight weeks for all their hard work, commitment and care for Littletown children both in school and at home. It has been a challenging time for all of us, but I am very proud of how the school and the 'LittletownBigTeam’ has come through it all together.

Please find here all the information you need on a range of things for next week onwards.

**Our plans for next week onwards**

**Keeping safe**

As you saw in last week’s newsletter, we will be returning to all the elements of our school risk assessment exactly how we left off on Monday 4th January. All of this information can again be found at the bottom of this newsletter. I forgot to mention the back gate last week. This will continue to be open for pick up at the end of the day from Monday.

**Attendance**

The Government has set out that once again, attendance to educational settings is compulsory from Monday. If you have any questions or concerns regarding attendance please get in touch with me immediately.

**Language and narrative framing**

At Littletown we don’t subscribe to, and are increasingly frustrated by the prevailing narrative and language used nationally about the children and their education, especially by the media. This includes references to mental health crisis, trauma, lost generation, recovery, gaps and catch up. Using this kind of language about the children and with the children, has a detrimental impact on them and could possibly lead to a self fulfilling prophecy. Instead we will be using language which reflects the positive mindset we are adopting with terms such as; renew, refresh, rengage, re energise, rebalance. We will be talking to the children about their character, resilience, range of learning styles, sharing of their learning and growth mindset. Please can I ask all of you to support us with this and echo this approach with your children at home. I know this may seem a very small thing, but it really can make a massive difference.

**Mental wellbeing focus and videos**

We will still be ensuring emotional wellbeing is at the forefront of our support for children when they return next week. This support will involve thinking about the ‘5 key principles of recovery’; putting emotional wellbeing first, re-affirming school’s strengths and core values, placing relationships front and centre, re-affirming safety and routines, acknowledging loss and change.

We will be showing the children some videos about looking after their mental wellbeing and we will be sharing these with you each week in the newsletter. Here is the first one <https://youtu.be/wVXoDFeVjj4> which is an overview of the 10 a day and acts as a really good reset and recap of these for the children. If you have time it would be really good to watch this with your children over the weekend before coming back to school.

**Lockdown birthdays**

We will allow children to come in non-school uniform on any day next week other than Monday (unless your birthday is on Monday!) if they had their birthday since being away from school. I would like everyone in uniform on Monday please as it is a symbol of us all coming back together.

**Shoes!**

I am aware that tiny feet may be less tiny than they were in January and restrictions mean shoe shopping is not currently possible. If your child’s shoes do not fit then they can wear other suitable footwear for school until restrictions allow the purchasing of a new pair.

**School dinners**

Please remember to book any school dinners by Friday evening for next week.

**Learning**

We have been having lots of discussions about how to structure and scaffold the children’s learning from Monday onwards. I will give further explanation in next week’s newsletter as there is already a lot to digest in this one. The key message is that we will be moving forwards with the curriculum and continuing with coverage originally planned, whilst using a range of strategies and support to help children with misconceptions and learning they struggled with over the last few weeks. We will also be assessing the children, but in a subtle way without lots of tests.

**Staff Lateral Flow Tests (LFTs)**

As you may recall, for the last 6 weeks, along with all Primary school staff across the Country, we have been taking Covid-19 Lateral Flow tests on Wednesdays and Sundays. So far, I am pleased to say we have not had any positive results. A positive result for a staff member will result in their absence and may result in me notifying you of a bubble closure. Any communication to parents regarding a positive LFT will be on Wednesday evening or Sunday afternoon.

**Staff vaccinations**

In the absence of a National school staff vaccination programme, we will be releasing each individual staff member to receive their Covid-19 vaccination as and when they are invited to do so. Please be aware this may result in some short term disruption to staffing.

**Clubs and peripatetic music lessons**

These are all able to recommence as of Monday alongside full reopening. Club providers and music teachers will communicate directly with parents.

**Would you like to learn the Ukulele or Violin?**Ukulele and Violin lessons available at Littletown Primary

Academy E-mail: emilymillermusic@yahoo.co.uk From Year 2 upwards.

**Lateral Flow Tests for Primary school pupils**

On Sunday the Department of Health and Social Care announced that from Monday 1st March, households with primary school, secondary school and college age children, including child care and support bubbles, can test themselves twice every week at home as schools return from Monday 8 March. The twice weekly test kits can be accessed:

- at a local test site

- by collecting a home test kit from a test site

- by ordering a home test kit online

Please find here a link which provides further information on how to obtain the tests which is quick and easy to use. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rapid-lateral-flow-testing-for-households-and-bubbles-of-school-pupils-and-staff?utm_source=1%20March%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19>

As Public Health England states: Around 1 in 3 people with coronavirus (COVID-19) do not have symptoms but can still pass it on to others. Regular testing of people without symptoms (asymptomatic testing) is important to help stop the virus spreading.

Finally, please make sure you read through all the practical information at the end of this newsletter about returning to school next week. We really, really can’t wait to see you all and have all the children back in school where they belong. I wish all of you a good weekend and I wish those of you who have been home teachers for 8 long weeks, a very relaxing week next week!

Yours faithfully,

David Perkins 

Principal

**World book day**

Well it certainly was a different world book day this year. Thanks to parents who made such an effort to support the teachers in class assemblies etc. Thank you to those of you who tweeted the school to share what they are reading for pleasure. Hopefully next year we can return to becoming costume designers!

**Red Nose Day/Comic relief**

On Friday 19th March, we will be celebrating Red Nose Day at school. On this day, all children are invited to come to school dressed as a superhero for a 50p (£1 per family) voluntary donation to the charity. There is no expectation for parents to buy costumes. Alternatively, children can wear non-school uniform. On the day, the children will be taking part in a variety of activities, planned to bring some laughter and cheer.

A limited number of Red Noses will be available for the children to purchase from Thursday. Noses cost £1.50 and they will only be available from your child’s classroom. If you would like your child to purchase a red nose, then they will need to bring the exact money into school as we will not be able to give change. Noses purchased are then to be kept at home until the 19th March when they will be able to wear them into school.

**Returning loaned chromebooks and keyboards**

A reminder that if you have borrowed a keyboard or chromebook please can I stress the urgency of returning these with your child on Monday 8th March. It is crucial that these come back to school so they can be cleaned and then put immediately to use with all children returning to school.

**Message from Frehsa**

Please see a message below from Fresha regarding some research they have been undertaking.

Dear Parent,

We are so looking forward to next week, we have missed serving so many children, with our delicious, healthy hot meals.

While you’ve been away we have been researching the benefits of a hot meal at lunchtime. The findings have been staggering, so much so, that we have changed our own eating patterns. ‘Will a hot lunch really help my child at school?’ Is the title of our next newsletter article so watch out for it. Do not hesitate though, I urge you to give your child(ren) the benefits gained from eating a hot meal at lunchtime by booking school lunches now! Ready for Monday 8th March.

**Full reopening Monday 8th March**

**Key Information**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Class** | **Start Time** | **Drop off Point** | **Finish Time** | **Collection Point** |
| Nursery | **9.00am** | In Front of the Nursery building | **3.00pm** | As drop off |
| Reception - Mrs Katene/Mrs Hawkins | **8.50am** | Front Playground (class lining up) | **3.05pm** | Slope on Front Playground |
| Reception - Miss Croft | **9.00am** | Front Playground (class lining up) | **3.15pm** | Slope on Front Playground |
| Year 1 - Mrs Veevers | **8.50am** | Front Playground (class lining up) | **3.05pm** | Slope on Front Playground |
| Year 1 - Mrs Lambert/Miss Meecham | **9.00am** | Front Playground (class lining up) | **3.15pm** | Slope on Front Playground |
| Year 2 - Mrs Bentham/Mrs Rossiter | **8.50am** | Front Playground (class lining up) | **3.05pm** | Scooter rack on Front Playground |
| Year 2 - Mr Luxton | **9.00am** | Front Playground (class lining up) | **3.15pm** | Scooter rack on Front Playground |
| Year 3 - Mrs Searle/Mrs Davis | **8.50am** | Classroom Door | **3.05pm** | Top Back Playground (from class line) |
| Year 3 - Miss Bodgin/Mrs Hugerre | **9.00am** | Classroom Door | **3.15pm** | Top Back Playground (from class line) |
| Year 4 - Mrs Wright/Mrs Arni-Tossell | **8.50am** | Year 3/4 Door | **3.05pm** | Top Back Playground (from class line) |
| Year 4 - Mr Driscoll | **9.00am** | Year 4 Music Room Door | **3.15pm** | Top Back Playground (from class line) |
| Year 5 - Mrs Binmore | **8.50am** | Classroom Door | **3.05pm** | Lower Back Playground (from class line unless walking home alone) |
| Year 5 - Miss Urry | **9.00am** | Classroom Door | **3.15pm** | Lower Back Playground (from class line unless walking home alone) |
| Year 6 - Mrs Fallon | **8.50am** | Classroom Door | **3.05pm** | Lower Back Playground (from class line unless walking home alone) |
| Year 6 - Mr Priddle | **9.00am** | Classroom Door | **3.15pm** | Lower Back Playground (from class line unless walking home alone) |

**Entering and Exiting the School Premises**

* Please adhere to the signs and one way systems at all times.
* Please ensure you are wearing a face covering when on the school premises
* The back gate will continue to be opened at the end of the day
* Please phone or email the school if you need to speak to a member of staff. No visitors are able to enter the school building.
* All children are to enter the school premises through the main front gate and exit through the front gate next to the Nursery or via the back gate
* We ask that only one parent/carer comes into the playground to drop off/collect your child.
* If your child’s classroom is located at the back of the school please be aware there are steps.
* We advise only 1 person drops off and collects.
* If you have more than one child coming to school please drop off the child at the earliest start and end time. (We are aware that the staggered start/end times are not ideal, however we have tried to minimise any disruption matching most families to the same start and end time.
* If you are picking up before the end of the day please knock on the classroom window rather than entering the external classroom door.
* Please remember that staff are unable to assist by holding children’s hands at drop off time, if your child clings to you and refuses to leave you then you may need to take your child home.
* As soon as you have dropped off or collected your child, please leave the playground as quickly as possible. Please be aware, that in order to keep to current government social distancing guidelines, staff must adhere to 2m distancing from adults, and will not be able to take your children from your arms, should they be anxious or upset. Whilst the guidelines acknowledge that staff will not be able to keep to this social distancing with the children, due to their age and needs, we need to adhere to the guidelines when interacting with parents/carers.
* If you have any messages, these can verbally be given to the staff member receiving your child or rung through via phone.

**Additional Information**

* All children to wear full school uniform
* Please do not send your child with anything other than their book bag, fruit snack, lunch, water bottle, sunhat (suncream already applied if needed) and jacket/coat if necessary.
* We are hoping that fruit snacks will be available as normal for the Y1 and Y2 children but this is to be confirmed.
* Please give the teacher at drop off any new medication and asthma inhalers.
* Please inform the member of staff in the morning if someone different will be collecting your child. If changes happen in the day please ring the school.
* Please inform the school by phone or email if there are any changes to your home circumstances including change of contact numbers.

**What to bring to school:**

Your child needs to bring in (all named):

* Bookbag
* Water bottle
* PE kit and trainers (to stay in school and be taken home at half term)
* Lunchbox (if packed lunch)
* Fruit snack
* Coat and sunhat

Reading books and reading records will operate as normal. The school will provide children with their own pencil case with the resources they need.

Please **do not** bring:

* Stationery
* Hand sanitiser
* Toys/comforters/squishies etc (unless this has been approved previously by the SAFS team)

**Lunches**

Please continue to book lunches through ParentPay. If you are new to school you will be given a ParentPay login in the first week. Please remember to book school dinners by Friday night for the following week.

**Behaviour**The behaviour policy has been updated in accordance to the Government guidance. These changes reflect the importance for all children to follow the rules to keep themselves and others safe, for example not spitting. The policy can be found on the school website.

**If your child becomes unwell**

If your child displays covid symptoms whilst at school, we will contact parents/carers immediately and ask you to collect your child from a specific school entrance. Your child will be isolated in a room with a staff member whilst awaiting collection. Parents/Carers will need to take their child to be tested.

If your child becomes unwell at home, please contact the school and keep us informed of the type of illness. Please inform us immediately if it is covid.

If another child or adult in your child’s pod tests positive for covid, then all adults and children in the pod will need to self isolate for 14 days.