

17th March 2022

Dear Parents,

Although yesterday was rather wet, it has been so lovely to see more signs of Spring over the past two weeks. The children have certainly enjoyed being out in the sunshine, and the grounds of the school are looking very attractive. Year 6 had a fabulous visit to Waddesdon Manor on Monday this week studying the bird conservation programme as part of their Science; completing an orienteering course, and seeing the bulbs they planted in the autumn in full bloom.

It was so wonderful to welcome you to Parent Consultation Meetings last week. This is the first time since March 2020 that we have been able to meet with you in person to discuss the progress your children are making. Thank you to those parents who added a comment to our board recording positive feelings about the school. These are much appreciated and form part of our evidence base for future inspections of the school.

I would also like to thank everyone for their support of the Book Fair over last week. It was lovely to see the children so excited to choose a new book to enjoy – and to use their new book mark. (Thank you PTA.) You may remember from years gone by that the school earns commission from the sales of the books, and we will be selecting new books for the library and classrooms in the coming weeks. Your support is much appreciated.

As you may know this week is STEAM week – Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics – and the children have enjoyed a range of different learning activities around these important areas. Today is a House Challenge – I am looking forward to seeing the towers grow as the children undertake a group construction activity. Please do find a moment to ask your child about some of these special activities – the children have been very enthusiastic in school!

The period of the pandemic has been very challenging for everyone, especially with the frequent changing rules from Government and frequent changing Guidance from the Department for Education. I felt it would be helpful to summarise the current situation for you for clarity now we are in what the Government refer to as 'learning to live with Covid':

- The priority of Government policy is that children face minimum disruption to their face to face education.
- Good hygiene, appropriate cleaning and ventilation remain as expected measures; and we continue to have these in place.
- Face coverings are no longer advised for visitors in communal areas.
- Testing for the corona virus should only be undertaken if the person is showing symptoms of the virus (a high temperature, a new continuous cough and a change to or loss of the person's normal sense of taste and/or smell).
- If a child has symptoms and is awaiting the outcome of a test they should not attend school. If the outcome of the initial test is negative they should return to school immediately if they feel well enough to do so. If the outcome of the initial test is positive, they should self-isolate, then test from day 5 since the onset of symptoms. Isolation may end at two consecutive days of negative result. Isolation ends on day 10 regardless of test outcome.
- The children should attend school as normal if they are well, even if a family member has tested positive for the virus.

- Contact tracing has ended. Therefore, contacts are no longer required to self-isolate or advised to take daily tests.
- Remote learning activities will be provided for children who are self-isolating, and should be undertaken only if they are well enough to do so. If the child is ill, either with the Covid-19 virus or any other childhood illness, they should not be completing learning at home.
- Remote learning project activities will be provided should high levels of staff absence mean a class has to move to off-site learning.
- The school will continue to follow all advice and Guidance from the Department for Education and Public Health England. Only in the event of being advised by them is the school permitted to share information regarding reasons for absence of children or staff. (This is a GDPR issue on which the school is required to follow the legislation.)

As I am sure you are aware, particularly throughout the last two years we have made every effort to support the children, not only with their learning but also to support and minimise any anxiety or worries they may have faced. This remains a priority both around illness and the current world situation. As you may remember, we implemented considered arrangements to enable the children to develop security in their learning and to minimise the disruption to their development due to the lockdown periods. Our regular assessments allow us to quickly identify any areas of learning insecurity and so to address them in a timely manner. In fact, next week is assessment week, when the children in Y1 to Y6 will be completing their usual formal termly assessments in English and Mathematics. These are not a cause for any anxiety.

Last Friday there were a number of messages share with you including the School Council information regarding Comic Relief and support for Ukraine; from myself regarding Ukraine; and from the Governors regarding the annual Parent Survey. If you have not yet had a moment to participate in this, please do try to do so. It is appreciated by the Governors and helps them to assess your views of the school; to set the strategic direction moving forward; as well as allowing them to work with us to address any issues which may have arisen. The survey can be accessed at <http://bit.ly/ccsparentsurvey2022> .

You will already be aware that Mrs C Craft is retiring at Easter after many years of supporting the children of Cheddington at our school as this was communicated to you last week. We have other staff changes taking place at the end of this term also: Mrs K Dance, who has worked in the Office for almost two decades, and Mrs Meriden, who has been with us over more recent years, will both be leaving to enjoy their well-earned retirement. We are obviously very sad to be saying goodbye, and I sure you would want to join us in wishing them well in all the new adventures they have planned.

I am pleased to be able to share with you that Mrs L Craft will be our new Administration Officer, and she is already in post to enable a smooth transition from Mrs Dance. We are also looking forward to welcoming Mrs Dachtler to our staff team – she will be teaching Year 1 on Monday to Wednesday from next term. Mrs White will continue to teach Maths to Year 1 on Monday and Tuesday, and will also be working across classes to enable the school to continue to develop effectively. This is an exciting opportunity for us all.

Just a final note to remind you that tomorrow is Comic Relief and the children will be taking part in a special activity and collectively running to Salford. They are invited to wear a red accessory for Comic Relief, and blue and yellow clothing in support of the international situation. Donations will be shared between Comic Relief and DEC.

Mrs K. Tamlyn
Head Teacher