



Friday, 6 March 2020

NEWSLETTER

Head Teacher's Remarks

Reminders
Safeguarding Lead
Village Easter Trail
Coronavirus Action Plan
Transport Consultation

It seems a long time since half term, and life in school has been busy as usual since our return from the mid-term break. The children had such a fantastic day yesterday for World Book Day – their enthusiasm and excitement as they guessed each other's characters and shared their favourite stories was a joy to see. The children also enjoyed guessing the 'shelfies' of various members of staff, and investigating the crime scene in the library where a number of book characters had had a picnic on the library table, and left behind all sort of things! Thank you for supporting your children with their costumes and props. Reading is a gift; and the power of books to inspire, entertain and educate cannot be underestimated, even in this digital age. I am so pleased to be able to share with you that we were awarded over £400 of books for the reading scheme from a scheme run by the Sun Newspaper. We have also committed a considerable sum of money to new and 'replacement of favourites' book, which – thanks to an amazing discount – will bring several thousand pounds worth of new books in to the school. Thank you also for your support of the Book Fair. The children have so enjoyed being able to choose and new book with their tokens, and the school will benefit from commission offered by Travelling Books, which will add more books to the classrooms and the library.

I would like to assure you that the safety of the children is our prime priority. In this time of uncertainty regarding the Coronavirus we receive daily updates from Public Health England and the Department for Education. We also send out to you all information we are asked to share, and in school we follow all the advice as requested. As you will see from the update yesterday shared later in this newsletter: 'Current advice remains in place: No school should close in response to a suspected (or confirmed) COVID-19 case unless advised to do so by Public Health England.' We are aware that sensitivities are heightened at present due to diagnosed cases in the local area. We have always stressed the importance of good hygiene with the children, and we continue to do so. We have provided each class with sanitiser to be used after break and lunch daily as an added precaution. Our cleaners maintain the school at an excellent level of cleanliness, and all products used are designed to minimise the lingering of 'bugs'. We chose this week to use child age appropriate Covid19 information as the basis of a comprehension exercise to help the children to understand the health concerns and personal management for themselves during this time without some of the sensationalist headlines they are aware of from the press and media.

Last week the Governors sent out details of the annual survey they run for parents. Please do take a few moments prior to Friday 13th March to complete this survey. It really helps the Governors in understanding your views, and when discussing and setting the aims and objectives for the school for the coming year. Thank you for your support in this.

I would like to apologise about the time it is taking our Grounds Contractors to source the materials needed to repair the sensory garden. I am well aware that this lovely resource for the children is currently not available, and am doing everything possible to speed up the repair process. We do hope it will be available by the summer – fingers crossed!

It was a real pleasure to welcome almost all of you to Parent Consultation Meetings this week. I do hope you found them useful and informative. We appreciate your support of your children and it is so good to work together to support, enable and empower them to achieve their very best. Thank you for your time and commitment.

A number of children who learn an instrument or voice, and those in choir, will be performing in Music Evening in a couple of weeks. This is always a lovely event when, in a relaxed atmosphere, children at all stages of musical learning have a chance to perform. Due to fire regulations we are limited in number to ninety in the audience and priority will be given to the families of the individual performers. (Choir performed at Birmingham and will again be singing at the village fete in the summer, as well as in various assemblies at the end of the year.)

Next Friday is Sport Relief. As you will be aware we do support this National event. We would like to invite the children to come to school wearing sports clothes other than football kits in return for a donation (suggested £1) which will be given in its totality to Sport Relief. The Sports Councillors are arranging a number of active challenges for the children to enjoy during the day. It should be a great day.

I think that is all the news at present – and thank you for reading this longer than usual remarks.

Mrs K. Tamlyn

<u>Reminders</u> Tuesday, 10th March - Y4 Swimming	<u>Safeguarding Lead on duty</u> Monday - Mrs Tamlyn Tuesday - Mrs Tamlyn Wednesday - Mrs Tamlyn Thursday - Mrs Tamlyn Friday - Mrs Tamlyn
---	---

Village Easter Trail

The PTA would like to invite you to join them for a fun Easter trail around the village on Friday 3rd April at 1.30pm. The trail will start in the School playground and will include an Easter Egg or Craft Activity which the children can take home. On completion of the trail, the children will be entered into a draw to win a mystery prize.

Just come along on the day.

The cost for this event is £3 per entry.

Government Coronavirus action plan

The government have launched their Coronavirus action plan. This document sets out what the UK as a whole has done to tackle the Coronavirus (COVID-19), and what it plans to do next.

The action plan can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan>
The document includes:

- what we know about the virus and the disease it causes
- how we have planned for an infectious disease outbreak, such as the current coronavirus outbreak
- the actions we have taken so far in response to the current coronavirus outbreak
- what we are planning to do next, depending upon the course the current coronavirus outbreak takes
- the role the public can play in supporting this response, now and in the future

Current advice remains in place: No school should close in response to a suspected (or confirmed) COVID-19 case unless advised to do so by Public Health England.

The importance of hygiene

Personal hygiene is the most important way we can tackle COVID-19, especially washing hands more; and the catch it, bin it, kill it strategy for those with coughs and sneezes.

Please help us in sharing simple and effective hand hygiene messages.

<https://twitter.com/NHSuk/status/1235112744917049346>

Public Health England has a dedicated webpage with a range of posters and digital materials at:

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/101-coronavirus-/resources>

Sign up is quick, free and means you will be alerted as more resources are made available.

Department for Education Coronavirus helpline

On Monday we launched a new helpline to answer questions about COVID-19 related to education. Staff, parents and young people can contact the helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

Where to find the latest information

Updates on COVID-19:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Guidance for educational settings:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Travel advice for those travelling and living overseas:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

Transport consultation:

Last academic year I shared with parents the consultation link regarding home-school transport for Buckinghamshire County Council. I know that many of you responded. The outcomes of that consultation have caused concern for a number of families in the village, who have been communicating directly with the Council regarding this issue. As a result, the County Council have issued the following advice:

For admissions from September 2020 the Council is removing an exception in its policy which has been in place since September 2012. The Council Policy is to provide free transport to a child's nearest Bucks school which is generally regarded as the nearest school geographically. However, there are four out of county schools regarded as virtual nearest Bucks schools. One of these is Tring School. Therefore, if a family live closer to Tring School then they will not receive free transport to Cottesloe School. However, between 2012 and the present an exception to the policy has been applied which has provided most Cheddington residents with free transport to both Tring and Cottesloe. The Council carried out a public consultation on removing this exception in Spring 2019 and the new transport policy was agreed for this removal from September 2020. Those currently in receipt of free transport will retain this until end of Year 11 when they complete their statutory schooling.

We are aware of concerns from Cheddington parents, specifically asking why parents would apply to Tring school which is historically full. We have developed the following FAQs which you may wish to share with your parents. This will also impact on children living in Marsworth, Ivinghoe Aston and Dagnall.

1. If you no longer offer a special arrangement for our village, does the national guidance still apply?

Yes, if you have included your nearest school as a preference, we would consider your application for free school transport in line with the national guidance. The national guidance says we must provide transport to the nearest suitable school if it is over three miles from your home (for 8-16 year olds). If you have included a preference for the nearest school and were not offered it, then we will consider transporting you to the next nearest school with a suitable place for your child.

2. I do not think I have a chance of accessing a place at my nearest school so I don't want to put it as a preference. Can I still have transport to the next nearest school if you offer it?

You are required to include your nearest school as a preference if you wish to secure free transport. If you are not offered the nearest school, but are offered the next nearest school then it is clear that this could be considered to be the nearest suitable school. In these circumstances free school transport may still be offered in line with the national guidance.

If we place your child at a non-preference school which happens to be a school further away we will consider transport in the context of the preferences you expressed (for example, whether the preferences you expressed included your nearest school).

3. When will I know the decision in (2) above?

This takes some time to establish following the allocation so you will not be notified immediately. In the interim to maximise your chances of ensuring your child has home to school transport you may wish to apply for paid-for transport and then if free transport is agreed your paid-for application can be cancelled.