

# Ox Close Primary School Newsletter



Dedicated to Excellence

October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020 Volume 5

## **Adapting to COVID 19**

We are continuing to update and review all risk assessments due to the COVID situation. Although we are confident in the measures that we have in place, we can only control what we can control. As we continue to evaluate, we are adapting our procedures and, in some cases, how we work and how areas are set out. This week Mr Bewick has done brilliant work in adapting the office spaces and I would like to thank him for this, as well as Mrs Smart and Miss Ozturk for their patience. Another example of adapting procedures, is that our staff meetings and even meetings between me and Miss Bowden are being held virtually or on the telephone. In more exciting news, this morning Miss Bowden hosted our very first ever virtual Star of the week assembly. The children were absolutely thrilled and I am sure that many of you would have seen the photo on Facebook. Having the webcams will allow us to be very innovative and I look forward to fully utilising this potential moving forwards.

## **Testing**

If you or anyone in your family are displaying COVID-19 symptoms then the following link is useful in order for you to be able to book a test: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. Alternatively, you can also call 119. Under these circumstances, please keep us informed. Thank you. A few weeks ago, we sent home an information leaflet for parents and I hope that this is useful.

## **Social Distancing and Face Masks**

Parents across the county have been asking their respective schools about advice around wearing face masks at the school gate during drop off and collection. While schools do not have jurisdiction over parents off site, the advice from Durham County Council is that parents may choose to wear a face covering or mask if they feel as though it is difficult to maintain social distancing at the school gate.

## **Return to school and Home Learning survey**

Thank you to everyone who took part in our parent survey last week - we had an amazing 150 responses. 99% of parents were either very happy or happy with how their children had settled back into school, with 1% neither happy or unhappy. The survey also confirmed that the vast majority of parents have access to the internet and devices for if we have to close bubbles at some point.

## **Virtual Classroom**

As mentioned above, our Virtual Classroom continues to be available on our school website. There are some children that, as we go through the term, may need to self-isolate for numerous reasons. To ensure that these children are still learning whilst at home, we will upload planning on a weekly basis. These plans contain suggested activities to complete with your child and links to useful websites. In addition, we are also making arrangements to COVID-proof our curriculum in case of further significant longer-term lockdowns.

## **Wraparound Care drop off**

I have been asked to pass on a message with regard to breakfast club drop offs. If possible, it would be preferred if parents do not drive into the school grounds to drop off. This is due to the fact that children are coming in at various times. All vehicles that are on site are requested to stick to the 5mph speed limit, which is clearly displayed. In addition, it is requested that both adults and children enter via the pedestrian gate rather than making their way in via the school drive way. I am sure that everyone understands that this is in the interests of the children and all adults too. Thank you.

## **Year 1 / 2 Homework**

From next week, children will be sent a simple spelling activity and maths activity to complete for homework. Rather than putting these activities in the children's reading diaries, the homework will be emailed to you each week. It will contain information about how to support your child at home, consolidating the activities they have been doing in the classroom. Although the children are unable to bring in the work they have completed, we would love to hear about what they have been doing and you can make a note of any activities they complete with you in the space within the diary. Thank you for your continued support.

## World Mental Health Day

Next Friday we will be marking World Mental Health Day by holding a number of activities. The children and staff are also invited to attend school dressed in yellow on that day. Mental Health has always been a huge priority but this is especially the case at the moment with the COVID situation.

## New Menus Start in November

A copy of the new menu which starts after the half-term holiday is being sent out today. There are 4 main meal choices each day. You can book meals in advance up to Easter 2021 on Parent Pay. Many parents of Reception children have already returned their completed forms in July 2020 as this menu is the one we expected to offer from September. If you are unable to make your own bookings, please complete the form and return it to the school office ASAP. Thank you.

## School Photographer

The school photographer will be visiting school on **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October**. Due to COVID-19 we are unable to take family photographs and will be taking individual photographs only this year.

## Class Charts

I am delighted to announce our Class Charts winners of the week. In Reception, Jenson V gathered the most points while our top scorer this week in 1/2 was Luca S. In Key Stage 2 Evie R scored highest in 3/4 and Emily C was the top scorer in 5/6.

## Attendance

Despite the particular challenges of COVID-19, our attendance has been excellent since the beginning of term. I would like to thank parents for their support with this and also to pay tribute to the children and the staff.

Classes RB and 1/2P had the highest attendance this week with 100%. The overall school attendance this year is 97.6% while this week it has been 98.2%. The threshold for what is termed as persistent absence has been determined as 90%. **Unfortunately, we are also unable to authorise term time holidays as we have to follow the Government and Durham County protocol. The Durham County protocol explains that penalty notices must be issued 'in instances of unauthorised holidays in term time (where the holiday gives rise to 7 days or more unauthorised absence in any period...)**. The school processes absences and then the County Council pick up on unauthorised absence. The Government have now reinstated fines for unauthorised absences and their expectation is that all children will attend school.

## Dates for the Diary

Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	World Mental Health Day
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	Phototronics – school photos
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2020	School closes for half term
<b>October Half Term</b>	
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2020	Children back to school
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Flu Vaccination Day
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> , Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Parent Consultation Evenings – these will be held virtually and more information will follow.
<b>Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020</b>	<b>PD Day – School Closed</b>
Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> December 2020	School closes for Christmas holidays
<b>Christmas Holidays</b>	
<b>Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021</b>	<b>PD Day – School Closed</b>
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Children back to school

*A Bowden*

Miss A Bowden  
Head of School

*D Harrison*

Mr D Harrison  
Executive Headteacher