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17th December 2021 Newsletter



Dear Parents/Carers

It has been another unsettled year to say the least. I am extremely proud of the way that all of our school community have worked together to ensure that children remain happy, safe and well cared for. Staff have worked extremely hard to ensure that the run up to Christmas has been a special time for children. Christmas events have been a little bit different but we hope that you have all enjoyed our daily Advent Calendar that we have shared and will continue to share on Tapestry so please keep watching!

As I am sure that you are aware, last week the Prime Minister announced the implementation of Plan B of the COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan.

Following on from this announcement, the DfE released further guidance to schools which included the following message: "The Government is clear on the critical importance of not disrupting the education of children and young people and the Government will prioritise keeping all education and childcare settings open."

Thank you all for your ongoing support and understanding of the measures that we have put in place, all in line with the updated government and local authority guidance, to ensure that we do continue to remain open for all pupils; it is very much appreciated.

We will continue to move into the Spring term with the same systems in place for the school day. Children will arrive and be dismissed at staggered times and through the same gates/doors.

I do hope that everyone in our school community has time to rest, relax and recharge over the holidays and I wish you all a safe and peaceful Christmas too.

Bernadette

Updated advice from Durham County Council

A summary message for parents and carers which reflects the most recent government guidance when there is a case in the household is provided below:

What to do if there is a case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in your household?

It is strongly advised to increased testing when there is a positive COVID-19 case in your household:

- PCR testing for all adults and pupils if they are a close contact of a positive case in their household*.
- Daily LFT testing at home for 7 days for any adult and also for all children aged 5 years and over who are exempt from isolation and continue to attend school. The testing of primary age pupils is at parental discretion. Testing should start from the day the household member has symptoms or if they don't have symptoms from when they tested positive*.

**Note: People who have tested positive with a PCR test within the last 90 days should not be encouraged to test unless they develop new symptoms*

Attendance

Remember that it is important that your child attends school as often as possible. If your child is not in school, they are missing out on vital learning.

If your child is sick/unwell or has an appointment, you must contact the school office.

If a child has to take a coronavirus test, we would ask that these are emailed to the school email address enquiries@thegroveprimaryschool.co.uk

Thank you for your continued support.

Entitled to Free School Meals?

If you think your child might be entitled to Free School Meals, please contact the school office and the ladies will be able to check for you. This also applies to those children in Nursery although children do not stay for a school meal we could receive additional funding to support your child.

This also applies to children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. All children are entitled to a free school lunch but a check could mean we receive additional funding for your child to support them at school.

ParentPay

Please ensure that all money owed is paid before the Christmas holidays. If you have any difficulty, please contact the school office and we will be able to support. This can be on 01207 502938 or via enquiries@thegroveprimaryschool.co.uk

Positive Coronavirus Test Results

Please continue to share any positive test results via enquiries@thegroveprimaryschool.co.uk during the Christmas holidays. Thank you.

Support for Families

We have been lucky to be in a position to help lots of our families that may be finding things a bit of a struggle leading up into Christmas, especially with the current situation.

Rachel C successfully applied for a grant from the Greggs Foundation Trust which has allowed us to purchase food items (and some treats!) to provide our own food hampers to families. We are hoping to secure additional funding to support families in January- as well - which is always a tough month for everyone.

We also received some wonderful hampers including food, toiletries and small gifts from St. John's Church, in Castleside, which were beautifully presented and brought to school. We have been able to help over 20 families so far and 50 children have benefited - ages range from a few months up to 17 years.

We have had positive feedback from our families and are so pleased to be able to help in this way - there's no way we could do it without the help of the wider community - so thank you!

Swap Shop

Our Swap Shop is well stocked with a variety of nearly new uniform and we have a selection of winter coats too. Parents are not able to come and browse at the minute but if you can tell us sizes then we can let you know what we have available. Thanks to Rachel C and Tina stock is well organised and readily available too. Thank you ladies; another fantastic service that our families can access!

Please remember that the school will reopen after the school holidays on Tuesday 4th January 2022. We would like to wish all of our families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!