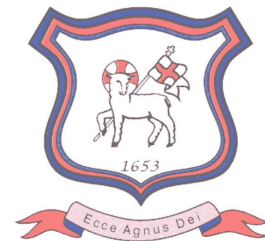


Bretherton Endowed CE Primary School Newsletter



8th January 2021

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Well this has been a different start to the New Year than we would have wanted. We hope that although we all had a quiet Christmas that you did manage some quality family time. We were delighted that we were able to plan some festive events for the children safely before Christmas but with the last twinkle of the Christmas tree lights a distant memory, we move to our current position.

We didn't expect or want to close but as the Government have put England into a National Lockdown and closed schools, we feel it is important that we follow the guidance in order to keep our community safe. The Government states that limiting attendance does not suggest that schools and colleges have become significantly less safe for young people. Instead limiting attendance is about supporting the reduction of the overall number of social contacts in our communities. This will safeguard our families and staff. With the rapidly rising numbers of cases across the country and intense pressure on the NHS, we will support the request to reduce the number of social contacts wherever possible.

Their advice now states that society must work from home if at all reasonably possible. Guidance also states that there only needs to be one family member who is a key worker for that family to be eligible for a school place during lockdown. We have a higher number of parents wanting places in school compared to the first lockdown and we are carefully reviewing numbers and requests for places to ensure the health and safety of all staff.

I therefore ask all key workers to please look at your situation at home and consider whether it is essential to send your child to school, especially during these few weeks when infection rates are so high and a family member may be working from home. Children in school are in two key worker 'Bubbles' supervised by teaching assistants and are completing the same Google classroom work. If they can access the work from home environment, it may be a safer option. We understand the challenges that families are facing in balancing work, childcare, home learning and caring or concerns for loved ones. This situation highlights, that everyone is faced with making impossible choices. We now have all the key workers who need a place registered and will monitor this situation.

We are committed to doing everything we can to support you at home to provide education for your children and support (where we can) with technology but in order to maintain the preventative measures with our staff team, I need to ask that you only ask for places for the keyworker hub if you have no safe alternative and only for the half or full day sessions that you absolutely need. We hope that as a school and school community we can support each other to balance the demand and will constantly review our risk assessment to ensure we can sustain the provision at Bretherton. This is a tremendously difficult and stressful time for all of us so please do contact us if you need anything. We will always do our best to help.

Could children coming into school have their trainers for activities outside please.

Remote Learning

We learned much from the previous lockdown and the staff have moved mountains since September to ensure they could move to remote learning quickly. None of us expected this quickly but I am proud of what our staff have achieved at this early stage and we will continue to refine our provision. We are still learning new IT skills and new ways of teaching. Planning for online learning isn't the same as planning for face to face teaching but we are committed to following our curriculum as much as possible so our children have limited negative impact on this latest closure. Staff have begun to try new ways of working to gauge the benefit to children and families– from recorded introduction to learning, online availability and 1 to 1 support on Google classroom where needed. Thank you for your positive comments and feedback– we want to get it right. We appreciate technology and time are challenges at home and we are flexible and supportive of everyone's situation but please let us know if you are experiencing any barriers to remote learning and we will try and help. In achieving this, we can keep the number of children in the care of teaching assistants in school as low as possible and reduce the risk of transmission as much as possible.

Thank You

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Do you need help getting more data on your mobile devices?

You can apply direct through this link for additional free data for home learning. Please use it if you feel it will help.

<https://get-help-with-tech.education.gov.uk/about-increasing-mobile-data?fbclid=IwAR1qR7jzYQi1W28Le3Hk-vtNJBHfTJ1BYZrW2d0aUTEJIURyspMriS2AX>

We also have over 30 Vodafone free 30 day data cards in school should you need one. Just call the school office.

Use of Xbox and Playstation to access Google classroom

There has been reports in the media that you can access Google classroom through games devices— Xbox and Playstations. The information can be found at https://secure.schoolspider.co.uk/administrator/index.php?m=page_form&id=82964

Do you need any support financially?

We know that our local WI have secured a grant to support our local community which includes any family whose child attends Bretherton. If you would benefit from a food voucher, or need any further support, please let me know or contact the WI direct. This money is to support you if you find yourself in any financial difficulty due to Covid, so for whatever the reason— fridge needs replacing, support with food bills or other bills, please do access it as it's ultimately for your children.

It may be that you are entitled to Free School meals, therefore if you feel that you may qualify you can register at <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/free-school-meals/?page=2>

The HUB

With staff challenges, we are currently managing a limited hub provision. Please provide advance notification to The HUB number (07957 302125) for sessions needed and cancellations. Again, if we could ask you to only use if you have no other safe option.

1 to 1 devices

One regret is that we have not been able to receive our 1 to 1 devices in time for this lockdown. I am continually chasing this in the hope that our order will come as originally scheduled in January.

School Vacancies

We still have a vacancy for a Welfare Assistant 12.00—1.00 Monday to Friday— for when we reopen. It's a great role in school as you get chance to chat and play with our fabulous children. If you are interested, please call Mrs Moxham.

Online safety

There is evidence that lockdown last time resulted in an increase of online safeguarding concerns and we would like to alert our parents of the support that is available to filter inappropriate content. <https://www.lgfl.net/online-safety/resource-centre?s=16> and <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Residential trips cancelled

We have received confirmation that our annual residential for Year 6 has been cancelled and although we will book (if permitted) events for Year 6 at the end of the year, the payments made by parents will be refunded as soon as we can process them in the school office. You will receive a secure email from Mrs Carlyon requesting your bank details which when received monies can be refunded.

Year 4 and 5 were due to visit Hothersall Lodge overnight for 1 night in March. This has not been cancelled but we have transferred the sessions to long day visits as soon as we are allowed, in order to fulfil the curriculum content planned. We will advise you of any changes as soon as we have received their paperwork.

NSPCC charity donations through Christmas lights

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the donations for the NSPCC for Christmas light decorations on South Road. Together we raised £327! That's fantastic.

Guitar Tuition

We have cancelled Guitar lessons for this term therefore payments already paid for the Spring Term will be carried forward to sessions when we return.

Toast

For those pupils who are currently in school we will still be offering toast for morning break . If your child would like toast please send in 20p per day to purchase this. This also applies to Class 1. For those who have already paid for the current half term in Class 1, this will be transferred as payment for when we return to school fully.