

Headteacher's Blog End of Year 2020

Thanks

I cannot believe that it is the end of the school year today. It has been the strangest term in my 30+ years of teaching.

I want to say a huge thank you to our Year 6 Leavers! They are lovely young people. They have been one of the easiest going year groups we have had, who enjoy being together and have made a superb Year 6 team. We will miss every one of them greatly and are saddened that we haven't been able to do so much of what we hoped of together. We know they will all shine brightly at High School and do us proud.

Our leavers will be presented with a Bible, bookmark and scientific calculator to help them on the next part of their journey; provided on behalf of the PTA, Church, Governors and Staff. They will also have their final Ellingham Worship presented by our 'You Tube sensation' -Canon Tony!

I am also massively proud of my amazing staff. There are not many schools who have been able to welcome so many year groups of pupils back following lockdown. They have worked tirelessly to make and sustain all of the changes necessary for us to remain open safely. It has been a pleasure to see so many happy children eager to return (and a few dancing/cheering parents too!)

We are thankful too that we have appointed a new Caretaker- John- who will start with us on 1st September. Additional cleaning will take place, as it is now, during the school day, such as to regularly touched surfaces, but we will be happily handing over control of the mops and myriad of colour-coded buckets and rubber gloves to our new member of staff. He will be with us both in the morning and after school.

Catch-up

Rather than wait for Government guidance, or some possible funding, we will return in September with changes to our usual timetables in order to facilitate catch-up for all pupils. Some key changes will be:

- Longer English and Maths lessons each morning
- KS2 lunch break will be reduced by 15 minutes
- No Y3/4 swimming for the Autumn Term will increase core curriculum time
- Golden Time will be replaced with fun challenge and skills sessions, focusing on learning gaps
- Additional phonics sessions for Y2 prior to National check in Autumn 2
- Y6 after-school catch-up sessions (start date will be confirmed)
- Revision sessions built-in to lesson starters and plenaries

- Additional 1:1 or small-group intervention sessions, where needed

We will update you once we know about any additional plans.

Updated Guidance

From September, the Government is giving no leeway on pupil attendance, so any non-attendance will have to be unauthorised.

The Department for Education have published some new guidance: '10 top tips to encourage children to read.'

The new information is to help parents to think about ways to make reading enjoyable and engaging:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/10-top-tips-to-encourage-children-to-read>

There is also guidance to help children aged 2 to 4 to learn at home during coronavirus (COVID-19).

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-aged-2-to-4-to-learn-at-home-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

The DfE has updated its information, guidance and support for parents and carers of children who are learning at home with new information about pupils returning to school in the autumn term.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/supporting-your-childrens-education-during-coronavirus-covid19>

Additionally, there is new guidance with advice for parents and carers who are looking after children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) including information about pupils returning to school in the autumn term.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-with-send-continue-their-education-duringcoronavirus-covid-19>

Homework

Please continue with your valuable reading support over the holiday. As we are still unable to welcome Brenda and Cryssie back to support reading, your added efforts at home are even more appreciated.

Topic research tasks will be sent home today via Parentmail.

Pupils will retain access to their current Google Drive classroom folders until at least 16th August - this includes Year 6, so they can access School360 and Purple Mash and a 'Leavers' 2020' picture folder within the Time Zone folder on the drive. (Hopefully

uploaded by today!) Therefore, if you want to go back and catch-up on any previous work, it is still in their current class folder.

Pupils will have access to Times Table Rock Stars and any intervention programs they already use online. We will maintain readiness to reinstate online learning for any pupils who need to self-isolate due to 'Track and Trace', or for all, if another lockdown is called.

Stay safe, well and I hope you all manage some holiday family fun. We look forward to welcoming our two, brilliant 'bubbles' back in September.

Diane Lakey