

Newchurch Community Primary School
Glebeland
Culcheth
Warrington
WA3 4DX



Telephone: 01925 763427
Fax: 01925 766045
www.newchurchprimary.co.uk
Email: newchurch_primary@warrington.gov.uk

Headteacher: Mrs J Narraway

25th January 2021

Dear parent/carer,

Congratulations on three weeks of blended learning. We are delighted with the work the children are producing each day and hope you can see that we are trying our hardest to take some of the burden off parents who need to work by doing additional live streaming when it is possible, and appropriate, whilst still teaching in school also. Once again, we cannot thank you enough for everything that you are doing to support the continuation of the children's learning.

Isolating classes

Some of you may be aware that it was necessary to ask some classes to isolate last week: Year 1 and Year 4 on Monday, Year 3 on Wednesday and then Reception on Friday. This is the largest number of classes we have needed to isolate at once since the outbreak of the virus and shows the impact of the rate of transmission of this new strain. After speaking with the Local Authority, this is a picture many schools are unfortunately facing.

Staff, who are isolating with their classes or awaiting test results, are continuing to provide the education detailed in our remote learning plan (if they are well enough to do so) but we need to be mindful that some of them do have families at home and may be trying to home school their own children as well as teach their classes. In some cases, existing staff in school will be taking on classes they do not usually teach to enable the continuation of learning. This additional workload for some staff may result in delays to any questions you have throughout the day or the speed at which you receive feedback. We will do our utmost to keep things swimming along until we are all back together and thank you in advance for your understanding and patience.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming the classes and staff back on the following days:

Year 1	Tuesday 26 th January
Year 4	Tuesday 26 th January
Year 3	Friday 29 th January
Reception	Monday 1 st February







LOTTERY FUNDED



Any children who were isolating because they were in Newchurch Robins are due to return on Tuesday 26th January. We have ensured that members of staff have been allocated to the children so that they create their own bubble and are in their own classrooms. Newchurch Robins is become fully operational again on Tuesday 26th January (tomorrow).

Curriculum Mats

On the days of the parental conferences, we trialled a different approach to the day by introducing curriculum mats. As well as proving the children with some learning experience so teachers could meet with parents, there was also a number of other reasons we have introduced them:

-  To provide a day where the children are not using the computer and therefore reduce screen time (Here is a link to get a free overlay on the computer screen to support your child https://www.aurelitec.com/colorveil/windows/?fbclid=IwAR2wuHBE_66C5KpuRBsOFkO5_n8YWILb-CyjlUc0bLKpTqHubCUvCJTCD4Y)
-  Allow those children who like creative activities to explore their talents and interests
-  To allow greater flexibility within the day to allow parents to do some of their own work
-  To provide some mindfulness activity for the children to support their well-being

The feedback from the curriculum days has been on the whole very positive. We appreciate that not all children are into the arts and prefer more structure to their days so may not adapt to them the same. However, there are children (I was one of them) who can find structure stifling and need to have an opportunity to engage with the other subjects more. We hope to cater for as many children as possible whilst maintaining the quality curriculum we pride ourselves on but understand that one size does not fit all.

Our aim is to continue with the current curriculum mats until the end of the half term (three more Fridays) and then move to one which involved the potential for siblings to work together on something, which would be lovely to see.

In addition to this, the school must statutorily provide the teachers with Planning, Preparation and Assessment time (PPA) each week. Our staff survey shows that there has been an increase of around 2 hours per day on top of their normal workload before and after school as a result of the preparation needed for blended learning so it our duty to make sure they consistently receive their PPA time.

Usually this is covered by Mrs Storey or Mrs Dixon right across the school. However, due to the rate of transmission we feel that it is not safe to expect them to mix bubbles at this point. Therefore, teachers will be having their PPA all together on a Friday afternoons but teaching assistants will be on hand to look at work and respond to queries.

Social interaction

During parental conferences, some parents have asked if school could facilitate some social interaction between the children. Like you, we want to keep the children connected as much as possible and this is the reason behind the register and the story to keep them united as a class.



We have carefully considered the idea of organising 'social time' for the children but feel that this would need a certain level of supervision for safeguarding reasons. However, we did come up with some ideas as to how you could facilitate it as parents:

- 👤 As you are all probably part of WhatsApp groups or Facebook, you could organise zoom 'get togethers' for the children between yourselves
- 👤 Some children actually FaceTime each other during the day whilst working on the same task so they can discuss their learning and give support
- 👤 The Friday allows for more flexibility in the school day so perhaps organise it then to finish the week off

Resources

We are aware that as we are half way through the half term, pages in books may be dwindling. We will be sending correspondence out later this week regarding how we are to replenish any resources you may need topping up.

Once again, thank you so much for all that you are doing but needless to say, if you are experiencing any difficulties emotionally, financially or otherwise, we are here to support you in any way we can. We will leave you with these two beautiful quotes from the book, 'The boy, the mole, the fox and the horse' by Charlie Macksey.

"What is the bravest thing you've ever said?" asked the boy.



"Help," said the horse.

"Asking for help isn't giving up," said the horse.



"It's refusing to give up."

Take care and keep safe.

Mrs Jayne Narraway

Head Teacher



LOTTERY FUNDED

