

*ASTON ALL SAINTS CHURCH OF
ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL*
Autumn Term Newsletter
SEPTEMBER 2020

Dear Parents,

A very special welcome back to all our families; for many of your children it is their first time in school since March and it is truly wonderful to see all the children back in school again.

I know that teachers have been sending messages to parents about how well the children have settled back into school and how well they have adapted to the new systems we have in school. I would like to endorse that - they have all been amazing! There is no doubt that, like all schools, classrooms are very different from how they would normally look and we are doing our very best to keep everyone in our school safe.

Thank you too to all our parents for helping us to make the beginning and end of the day as efficient and safe as possible. Arriving at the correct time helps us to keep everyone moving so that there is minimum waiting time at each end of the day. Parents can further help us by not staying in the playground or on the paths near school to chat to other parents. Please could we also ask that only one adult accompanies each child? This is the advice given by the government to schools. For a reminder on everything we are putting in place, please re read the letter which is still on the home page of the website. Also on the home page is the link to the DFE guidance for the return to school from the beginning of September.

A very special welcome to all our new families as they join our school for the first time; we hope that you and your children will enjoy being part of our school family in the coming years. We hope that all our new parents and children have enjoyed the short induction at the beginning of this rather different school year. We are looking forward to getting to know all our new children!

Very sad news

It is with deep sadness that I have to tell you that, during the summer holiday, Mrs Kiddy's husband passed away following a short illness. I am sure that, along with everyone in school, parents will join us in sending sympathy, love and prayers to Mrs Kiddy and her children.

Mrs Kiddy is taking some time off work for now and her role in the Foundation Class will be covered by a teaching assistant called Mrs Myers. Mrs Kiddy is missing everyone in school, especially getting to know the new foundation children and we look forward to welcoming her back in the near future.

Communication with parents – because of the current situation we are going to keep to an absolute minimum the number of paper copies of letters and information which we would usually send home to parents and carers. Our new parents will receive a hard copy of this first newsletter but thereafter this can be accessed on the school website – www.astoncofe.co.uk on the newsletter page. I usually send a newsletter once or twice each term.

In future, we will send letters in one or more of the following ways- email to parents, Dojo or the school website.

We will continue to provide news and updates via the school website and the class and school story pages of Dojo.

Thank you!

Thank you to Mr Cooper and the cleaners, Mrs Goddard and Mrs Horsley, who have worked very hard to clean the school during the summer holiday. Our cleaning team continue to do a wonderful job in keeping our school as clean as possible during the pandemic; every area of school is thoroughly cleaned at the end of each day.

School Meals – Taylor Shaw

As parents know, there is a limited menu available at the moment and the children are eating their meals in their classrooms; class bubbles cannot mix and this means that for now we cannot use the dining room. The menus are available to view on the school website as well as on the Lunch Hound order site. Please could we ask parents to order meals from home and these will be delivered to the children in their classrooms.

Universal Free School Meals

All children in F2, Y1 and Y2 are entitled to free school meals. If your child does not have a school meal, why not encourage them to try one? Our own school kitchen is open again which means all the meals are freshly prepared on site. If your child has moved into KS2 this September and you think you may qualify for free school meals, please contact the school office for more information.

Morning sport club/after school clubs

As stated in our letter in July, we are currently unable to operate either morning sport or after school clubs as this would mean mixing class bubbles of children together. The current DFE guidance asks schools to keep class bubbles separate to limit the risk of the transfer of infection. We will keep parents updated with any changes to this guidance.

School Uniform

Thank you once again to all our parents for supporting our policy on school uniform. The children always look very smart in their school uniform.

PLEASE could everyone ensure that their *child's name is clearly marked* inside each item – preferably with an indelible pen or with a sewn in name tape or button. If uniform is lost or misplaced, it is impossible to trace the owner if there isn't a name tag!

Eldon School Wear which is the uniform company we use, are now operating as usual. I know that Nick, the owner of the company, hand delivered a lot of the orders directly to school families during the summer holiday – marvelous service I am sure you will agree! Now that school is open again, uniform will be delivered to school each Friday.

If you wish to order any school uniform, the forms are on the virtual office page on the school website. Forms can be returned directly to the uniform company – the contact details are on the order form or they can be sent into school. However, please could we ask, if at all possible, that orders are sent direct to Eldon School Wear? Thank you.

I would like to remind parents that, whilst we sell uniform in school [direct from suppliers], there are also similar items, in our chosen school colour of burgundy, available in supermarkets and department stores. If any parents need a reminder of school uniform policy [colours etc] please

ask at the school office. The policy is also available on the school website. *Thank you.*

If any parents need support with the cost of school uniform, please let us know. This usually applies to children in receipt of free school meals [through income support, not the Universal Free School Meals for Foundation and Infant children] but if any other families are experiencing difficulties please get in touch. This Charges and Remissions policy also applies to off-site school visits, breakfast and after school clubs and there is a reminder on all letters informing parents about forthcoming off site visits.

PE

Whilst we are currently unable to do PE inside the school building, the children will be having sessions outside. For now, we are not asking children to change into PE kit but if parents can make sure that children wear sensible shoes every day, they will be able to take part in a daily mile and any outdoor exercise sessions safely.

Attendance -2020-21

The following guidance was issued to all schools by the DFE in July 2020-

The government guidance states – “...*school attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:*

- *parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;*
- *schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence*
- *the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct”*

As we begin this new school year I would like to remind parents about the criteria which is applied if parents request a leave of absence for their child. Information about attendance is also posted on the school website on the Virtual Office page. The list of school holidays is posted on the virtual office page of the school website. As schools were closed for almost 6 months in 2019-20, we hope that parents will avoid taking family holidays during term time.

Head Teachers are not able to grant any absence in term time except under “exceptional circumstances”. This is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purpose of a family holiday.

Governors at Aston C of E Primary School have also agreed that where a request for leave of absence is deemed to be in exceptional circumstances, permission will not be granted:

If the child has an attendance level that falls below 96% for the previous three terms should the leave go ahead.

*If the student is due to take any examinations or SATs during this period.
[SATs 2020 will be week commencing 11th May]*

Requests for leave of absence must also be made to the school in advance. DfE regulations do not allow any absences to be authorised after they have been taken. Leave of request forms are available from the school office or the school website. DfE have also stated that parents can be fined by the local authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school. Further information about this can be found at www.dfe.gov.uk

If your child cannot attend school because they are ill, please contact the school office as early as possible. There is usually someone in the school office from 7.00am each day to take messages. Alternatively, parents could email the message to the school email; emails are checked regularly. **The school email address is enquiries@aasp.dsat.education** Please do not send messages about illness to teachers on Dojo as these messages may not be picked up at the beginning of the school day.

We only require a message on the first day of illness.

If a child is absent from school and we have not had a message from parents or carers, a member of the office team will contact parents /carers.

As with all schools, we have resumed collecting attendance data and this is being reported to the local authority. This is also reported daily to the DfE who are continuing to monitor attendance in all schools during the pandemic. Usually at the beginning of the school year, I would be reporting to parents that we had had a celebration assembly for those children who achieved 100% attendance over the last school year and their names would be published in this first newsletter of the school year. Let's hope that this is what happens this time next year!

We will resume the reporting of attendance figures to parents in the spring term when we will report the attendance figures for the autumn term.

INSET DAYS

School will be closed on the following days for staff training.
9th October 2020, 7th June 2021, 2nd July 2021

Parent Helpers

I am sure that parents will understand that, for now, we are unable to invite parents and grandparents into school to volunteer to work with the children in class. We want to keep the number of visitors in school to an absolute minimum. We really value all the support that our volunteers provide and as soon as restrictions are relaxed we will let parents know.

Nut allergies

We have a small number of children in school who have nut allergies. ***Please could I ask*** all parents to support us and keep these children safe and free from any possible anaphylactic attack by **not** sending to school any food [for lunch or break snacks] which may contain nuts or a trace of nuts – for example -

- Cereal bars which may contain either a trace of nuts or nuts
- Any home baked/shop bought snacks/biscuits/cakes which may contain either a trace of nuts or nuts
- Any spreads [usually used in sandwiches] which may contain either a trace of nuts or nuts – this includes chocolate spreads and peanut butter

Thank you

School priorities

Each year all schools focus on specific areas for improvement. Our priorities for this school year have been posted on the school website and you will find them in a link on the virtual office page and on the home page. Parents will see that there is a significant focus on “catch up” in literacy and numeracy at the beginning of this school year.

School Curriculum

On the Virtual Office page parents will find links to the National Curriculum, the Chris Quigley Curriculum and The Rotherham Agreed Syllabus on which we base our RE Curriculum, which we use in school.

On each class page there is also a link to the overview of the curriculum your child will cover this year.

Homework

All parents will receive information from their child's class teacher about the arrangements for homework. There will be a combination of electronic and paper based homework with the plan to move to as much electronically as possible. Teachers will use Microsoft Teams and Dojo.

Parent Workshops

I know this may seem a long way off but Y6 SATS Week 2021 is the week beginning Monday 10th May. As we are unable to invite parents into school to any meetings or workshops this term, the following information will be sent to parents on email in the next few weeks in place of the workshops which would have been held –

- Y1 Phonics
- Y3 reading
- Y2 SATS
- Y6 SATS
- Foundation literacy

Open Evenings

Unless restrictions are relaxed in the next few months, we will not be able to hold our usual autumn term parents' evenings. We are currently looking at ways in which we can do this and will update parents later in the term.

WHITBY

We were so very sorry that our Y5 children were unable to go on their Whitby residential in June. We had re booked this for the end of September but unfortunately we also had to cancel this as the government are not allowing schools to take children on residential visits. We really want the Y6 children to have this experience so have booked again for the week after SATs in May 2021. We have also booked the following week [WC 24th May] for the Y5 children to have their residential in Whitby too. I do hope that both these visits are able to go ahead!

Off site visits – for this term we are not going to be taking the children on any off site visits. As parents know these are a key and much valued part of our curriculum and we do hope that once restrictions are eased, it will be safe to resume these visits again.

Church services and Sunday school in All Saints Church

Please see the church website and Facebook page for details about services in church. Currently these are mostly on Zoom and the links can be obtained by using the contact details on the church website.

Flu vaccinations for all children

Parents will shortly receive information about completing an online consent for their child to have a flu vaccination in school. This will be offered to all children in school and will take place on Friday 23rd October.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

One of the main purposes of our termly newsletters is to publish, well in advance, the dates of forthcoming school and church events. However, currently there are no dates to publish as, for the next few weeks at least, we are unable to host any events in school.

School will close for October half term on Friday 23rd October. The classes usually all finish at the earlier time of 3.15 before a holiday but the children will all leave at their specific class time.

School will reopen again on Monday 2nd November and all children should arrive at their specific class time.

Thank you for your support and patience during these far from usual times in our school.

Updates and information will continue to be posted on the school website and both the school and class story pages of Dojo.

Very best wishes to all our school families

Mrs Mellor
Head Teacher