

Newsletter No 9: Term 3

January 2021

Dear Parent / Carers,

Firstly, I know a small number of you are isolating due to Covid so we send our best wishes for speedy recoveries to you and your families. For everyone else, I hope you are all keeping safe and well. It seems amazing that I only wrote a newsletter a week ago and yet so much has changed / happened within that week. So, here's an update to keep our school community in the loop.

Nursery Re-opening

Our nursery had closed in line with our school closures and so we were only providing places to Children of Key workers where there was no child care at home. Toward the end of last week we were directed to re-open our nursery for the Monday –Weds sessions. This was a national directive to all Early year provisions. We have seen a small number of children return to this provision, which is understandable. It is clear from the media that if there is the ability to stay home then this is the safest option in terms of reducing infection risk. Thanks to our EYFS team for getting this provision re-opened so quickly.

Devices

It has only been a week since my call out for donations of devices was made. I am really pleased to say that we have been overwhelmed by the kindness and support from our parent / carers and community. In just one week we have had donations of 14 Amazon Kindles, 14 used laptops and a small number of other devices. These along with 15 notebooks not currently needed in school due to lockdown have been making their way to families in need. Thanks to the parent /carers who have donated devices, thanks to members of our community who have also donated – it is just brilliant to give all of our children the opportunity to access our online learning.



FSM hampers

From next week FSM hampers will last for two weeks (covering 10 meals replacing the meals each child would have had in school). Sodexo (our catering company) are teaming up with Morrisons and DPD delivery to enable the hampers to be delivered to families in receipt of this benefit. Each hamper comes with a suggested meal planner and recipe cards to help make use of the ingredients in the box. If you are in receipt of FSM for your child/ren and your child is not in school, please look out for an email outlining the details.

Staff Testing

From Monday the Government have asked schools to begin testing their staff twice a week using a 'Lateral Flow device' test. Apparently 1 in 3 people may have Covid but not develop any symptoms and so would not be aware of the need to isolate. Isolating positive cases in asymptomatic adults will really help reduce virus transmission. The LFD tests will be administered at home by staff who have opted into the testing scheme. Staff testing positive are required to isolate for a period of 10 days. This could mean that we see some disruption to staffing and may see some bubble closures in school. We ask for your continued patience and support if this ends up being the case.



Church of England Academy

Principal: Mrs Debbie Coker

Chair of Local Board: Mrs Trish Dodds



Value of the Term : Respect

Week 3: What can you do to care for the school environment?

Week 4: What would be your 'Golden Rule' that would make our world a fairer and more loving place?

Week 5: Why is it important to think before you speak?

Week 6: It's easy to show respect to those who think the same as we do. How do we disagree with others respectfully?

Learning to Learn skill for term 3 : Creativity.

Whole school Collective Worship takes place on Zoom @ 9.00am on Tuesdays each week. We look forward to seeing your child there! You are welcome to join them and support them in discussing the questions that come up. Zoom links are sent out prior to the sessions.



Book Swap

Wednesday Afternoons between 1pm – 3pm you are welcome to drop in to the Exploration Zone (under the circus tent) to swap any books and collect a pencil / exercise book should you need one. Place read books in the plastic box labelled 'quarantine books' and help yourself to new ones. Don't forget to use wear your facemask, use the hand-gel and socially distance if you see other people.



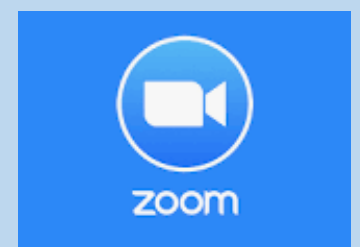
Good news from our fundraising team Friends of Fishponds CE Academy (FOFA)!

The Chair of FOFA contacted me last week to let me know that the target for the Exploration Zone had been reached. A combination of fundraising efforts over the start of this year and last combined with a couple of larger anonymous donations we have raised a total of £2500. This is phenomenal! We have already been talking to building companies about our designs to create a stage and seating under the Circus Tent in the Exploration Zone. We want a space our children can perform in, sit and read in during playtimes. We also hope to use the space as an outdoor classroom. We hope to get this work done so that the children can enjoy this space during the summer months. Thank you to you all for working to raise funds. Just goes to show, when everyone does a little bit, it can make a huge difference!

Remote Learning

I wanted to thank you for the encouragement some of you have emailed in regarding the quality of our remote learning.

Zoom Live teaching sessions:



Our staff teams are working hard to plan and deliver 'live' teaching sessions on Zoom which follow as closely to the learning journey we would cover if we were in school physically. We know that it will never be as good as actually being together but please encourage to join your child to join each session as these teach how to complete the work set on Seesaw in Maths and English. As the weeks are going on we are seeing more children joining and hope that with the delivery of devices we will eventually see everyone joining together. Zoom sessions are live teaching for the children so we would respectfully ask that parents / carers do not send messages to teaching staff via the chat function or ask things across the lesson during teaching. Although this probably feels like the easiest way to get an answer quickly, it can be disruptive to the flow of the lesson. Please use email to send any queries/ questions in to your child's teacher. You are always welcome to contact our school office and they will gladly help if they are able.



Seesaw:

Seesaw contains your child's independent learning. You will find a variety of activities linked to Maths and English live teaching sessions long with activities and teaching videos / voice notes teaching non-core subjects like History. Children can upload pictures of their learning or type their responses directly into Seesaw. The year group team monitor this platform throughout the day and will provide feedback to your child during the working day. At the end of each week activities are archived to ensure that your child's page does not feel overwhelming. Please note that any parent / carer communications should be emailed to the teacher / year group team not via Seesaw as this is your child's platform.

Finally, thank you to you all for supporting your children with their learning whilst you juggle work and other commitments. I hope that you found the recent parent workshops on Maths Calculations and(for EYFS) Phonics Workshop a useful aid in supporting your child alongside what is provided by your child's teacher. Don't forget to visit the school website tab 'Remote Learning' or for EYFS parent /carers' EYFS Remote Learning' tab for help-sheets and information about our remote learning.

Struggling? Finding things tough?

If you are struggling or finding things tough, you are not alone. Please reach out and contact our Family Link worker Michelle Cahill on : 07595615388

Keeping children safe online

Now our children are using devices and accessing the internet during lockdown it is important to protect them by setting up parental controls and ensuring that our children are staying safe online. The NSPCC has developed a number of resources to help support parent/ carers with this. I have attached a link to their materials and hope this is helpful.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>



Dates for your diaries , with best wishes from Debbie Coker (Principal)

Thursday 28 th January 21	RE Day – The theme this year is ‘Inspirational People’ We will focus on people who inspire us day to day and also touch upon how, for some people, this might be a religious figure. The children will be thinking of this topic in phase assembly and also through independent learning on Seesaw.
Tuesday 9 th February 21	Year 6 parent /carers information evening about the KS2 SATS and how to help your child. (cancelled as SATS are cancelled this year !)
Wednesday 10 th February 21	Year 1 parent /carer Phonics and Reading meeting. 4pm on Zoom.
Friday 12 th February 21	Last day of term 3 School closed for half term (Monday 15 th Feb – Friday 19 th Feb 21)
Half Term	School closed for half term (Monday 15 th Feb – Friday 19 th Feb 21). There will be no remote learning during this time.
Monday 22 nd February 21	Term 4 begins.
Thursday 4 th March 21	World Book Day! Advance warning ... get your book character costumes ready!
Tuesday 9 th March and Thursday 11 th March	Parents’ Evenings (on Zoom)
Friday 12 th March	Science Day – As a school we will be celebrating all things ‘Science’. Further information to follow.