King Street Primary & Pre - School

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25th September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Home learning questionnaire

Thank you to everyone who has completed the home learning questionnaire. This has really helped us to identify how many families would need a device in the event of a bubble self-isolating or a full local lockdown. We are now in a position where we have received a number of additional tablets into school and if you have indicated in the survey that this would be of use to you, we will be in touch shortly. The plan will be to issue these tablets over the next few weeks so that children can complete any work that teachers set for homework or project work and then they are familiar with them if they are moved to a home learning situation. If you have not yet completed the questionnaire but know your child would require a device, please do complete the questionnaire and if we have enough devices remaining your child will be allocated one. A link to this was sent out last week; if you need this again, please contact the school office.

I think, looking at cases in schools across Durham, we have to prepare for the fact that a return to home learning is not a matter of ‘if’ but a matter of ‘when’. We feel very fortunate to have had no confirmed cases within school to date and whilst we continue to hope this is the case, we also need to be realistic about the current situation and have a clear and efficient plan for home learning in place. There are now much stricter guidelines for schools of the expectations of home learning and we are fortunate that we already had Eschools in place which will support online learning. When the inevitable happens, either as a class bubble or a whole school, we will move immediately to online learning and therefore it is really important that your child knows their log in for their own Eschools page. Teachers are using this in school and have shown children how to log on many times but if your child has forgotten please log on using their first name.last name and the password king. Eg. Username: sam.smith Password: king.

In the event of a case being confirmed in school we are required to contact Public Health England who advise us on the next steps. This is likely to be that the class bubble (where the case is confirmed) are sent home immediately to self-isolate for 14 days. The rest of the school remains open. Parents are then asked to monitor their child at home for symptoms but are not required to take a test unless symptoms arise. I hope having this information will help to have emergency plans in place should the need arise.

NHS test and trace

We have been asked to raise awareness that the test and trace app has been launched and is called ‘NHS Covid-19’. This can be downloaded from your app store and will help identify if you have ben in close contact with someone who has tested positive.

Please remember that if your child has developed:

* a new, continuous cough OR
* has a temperature OR
* has loss or change to their sense of smell or taste

they must not attend school and you are advised to book a test for them.

Social distancing

The Local Authority have written to all school to raise the issue of social distancing with families. There appears to be similar difficulties across most schools where some families are not following social distancing guidelines. We expect that with wet and cold weather ahead that this has the potential to get worse as families gather under shelters to stay dry. We ask that you do not gather under shelters and do not share an umbrella with another family. We also ask that when you collect your children after school you leave the yard immediately and keep your children by your side to avoid them mixing with other households. This is especially important now that the county is under tighter restrictions. We have looked at shortening the time between year group collections but have concerns that closer timings would encourage more families to gather together chatting whilst waiting for their children to come out of school. We do continue to look for a solution to this but we musty put safety first, especially as cases are rising so rapidly. A copy of the letter from the Local Authority is attached.

Speech and language therapist

As part of our drive to make the most of your child’s time in school we have employed a Speech and language therapist who will work with us one day a week. Her name is Emma Harrison and is a highly experienced therapist who will be a valuable addition to the expertise in the school. Emma will work across the school over this academic year both training staff and working with individual children. If you have any concerns about your child’s speech and language please speak to the class teacher who can pass these concerns on to her.

School lunches

Just a reminder that if you need to make a change to a school lunch or move your child from packed lunch to school dinner (and vice versa) please give the office at least one week’s notice in writing (you can email the office kingstreet@durhamlearning.net)

Residents access lane

I have had more families and residents advise this week the back lane is still being used by cars as a drop off. Please do not use this lane. It is a residents’ access route only and should not be used by parents. There is a risk that when cars are reversing back up the lane, they are in danger of knocking a child over. Residents are also advising their property is being damaged. Please respect the local resident’s property and do not allow children to climb on their gates or bang against garage doors. Your cooperation is appreciated. We have a good relationship withour local community and do not wish this to change.

Finally, I just wanted to finish with a really positive message- your children are wonderful little people and they have taken the return to school in their stride. We are immensely proud of how well they have adapted to new routines, especially as a transition with their new teacher was not possible in the summer term. We know the situation we are in is not ideal but the children are happy and settled and it is now our job as teachers to ensure they continue their learning journey with smiles on their faces. Thank you for all of your support and for helping to ensure your child was prepared for the return. It has really paid off.

If you have anything you would like to speak to us about please email the school office or contact your child’s teacher though their eschools page.

Yours sincerely

J Bromley

Headteacher