

Newington CE Primary School



School Lane, Newington, Kent ME9 7LB
www.lowerhalstowandnewington.org.uk T: 01795 842300



KINDNESS

PERSEVERENCE

RESPECT

HONESTY

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Dear Parents and Carers

What a year! Who could have predicted this is how we would be ending the year when I wrote my first letter to you back in September?

As the academic year comes to an end, there is much to celebrate and also look forward to despite the fact that we've been working at a distance for so long.

The children seem to have embraced every experience or challenge provided for them whether this has been at home or in school. Recent highlights include reception hunting for the Gruffalo in forest school and the virtual sports day. The house points were hotly contested. Likewise the zoom transition visits this week have been interesting!

We were well placed to set up remote learning quickly, with a willing staff who undertook a very steep learning curve. The number of letters of thanks we have received that compare us favourably to other schools has come as a surprise. Our ethos is one of total commitment to our role as educators and for us it was a given that we would continue to provide daily flexible lessons online and hard copy packs and resources for any families struggling to access remote learning. I am very proud of the team and their sterling efforts to maintain learning during lockdown. Yet another reason why the team Newington is so special.

For the past few weeks we've been planning for a full return in September (and getting very excited). ***I have included key details in this newsletter for your information*** but more will be sent out after the return guidance is confirmed in August and again at the start of term.

All that is left is for me to wish you a very restful summer and to say that we look forward to seeing all of you on 3rd September.

Kind regards

Tara Deevoy
(Executive Headteacher)

NOTE FROM CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

As the school year comes to an end I am sure none of us have experienced a year like this. When the lockdown began, the schools were happy to be able to provide childcare for the children of key workers and those who were vulnerable. In fact, the support staff went above and beyond, providing learning for those in school using the daily online lessons from the teachers, not just the childcare requested by the government. Joining the schools together in term 5 further supported the staff in delivering learning for those both in and out of school. This system has been highly successful, winning praise from parents, carers and the LA. The remote learning uptake reports seen by governors show how valued this has been.



Eventually we were allowed to bring other children back into school where they were taught in 'bubbles' for the remainder of the term. At governors meetings we have heard about the huge effort it has taken to reorganize the schools to allow this to happen and the extensive paperwork in place to ensure everyone's safety.

So, on behalf of the governors, thank you to all the staff and senior leaders and thank you to all the parents who have supported at home. I look forward to welcoming you back to school in September. I know that things may be a little different but, in essence, it will be 'business as usual'.

Have an enjoyable break and stay safe and well.

Peter Marshall

STAFFING

Goodbye

As you know Mrs Brincat will be going on maternity leave during the holidays. But we hope to see her in the autumn with her new baby even if it is by zoom!

Mrs Brown is moving across from Lower Halstow to provide maternity cover and will teach Y3. Having worked at Newington all through lockdown Miss Brown is now a familiar face. As you already know, Mrs Jones, an experienced Y2 teacher, will be joining the team ready for when Miss Blackbourne leaves for maternity in October. We are also pleased to welcome Mrs Whitehead as an additional TA in Rowan class. She comes with a wealth of experience and will be providing additional support for pupils with SEND.

Hello!
A simple hand-drawn smiley face with two dots for eyes and a curved line for a mouth, positioned below the word 'Hello!'.

We have managed to move either the class teacher or TA up with each class, so everyone will have a familiar face to greet them in September.

VOLUNTEERS



We have benefitted greatly from the work of volunteers this year and it was such a shame when this had to stop due to lockdown. We continue to value each and every contribution, so thank you all! Particular 'lockdown thanks' go to the spouses of some staff members who have helped with the clearance of garden areas so that reception children could plant their wild flower garden and we didn't lose our allotment to a jungle! We hope to recommence the usual volunteer visits as soon as our initial review is complete in September and guidance is updated regarding visitors into school.

PARENT AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

Yet again our PFA heroes have done a stellar job, despite lockdown interrupting our fundraising efforts. Year 6 absolutely love their hoodies and it is lovely to be able to give them something to remember this very strange final year of school.

I'm sure you will all join me in thanking them for their ongoing efforts and please do volunteer to help out at an event if you can. We can only run these with your help.

JOINT FEDERATION SCHOOL



During term 5 we combined the schools and were based at Newington. This worked really well and gave opportunities for staff and pupils from both schools to become closer and get to know each other. A small silver lining in an otherwise cloudy sky. The school was a fantastic host and I know the Lower Halstow pupils and staff were made to feel really welcome.

This image of new temporary school signs created by staff and pupils featured in the Newington Parish Magazine representing the joint endeavor between the two schools.

SEPTEMBER INFORMATION

BREAKFAST AND AFTERSCHOOL CLUB

Our wrap around care provider Tetita (based at Lower Halstow) can't offer places to Newington pupils until restrictions are lifted. However, the morning club at Newington, overseen by Mrs Kent, will be running from 7th September as usual. This starts at 8am and pupils should be dropped to the main hall door. As we need to organize bubbles and social distancing, please **let us know the day before** if your child will be attending. This club will continue to cost just £1 per morning and is payable on the day or in advance if attending all week.



Children will be sent to class at their staggered times as per the schedule below.

PE KIT - CHANGES

From September pupils will need to **wear their PE kit to school with their school jumper on PE days.** Changing in classrooms is not possible while ensuring people's belongings do not touch or pupils do not bump into each other. PE will initially be undertaken outside, so **we have added PLAIN black or grey jogging bottoms or leggings to our PE kit list.** This will extend the outdoor PE season. Pupils are welcome to wear their plain black or Blue PE shorts to school on warmer PE days.

Your child will be told their PE days on the first day back and will come home with a slip for you to pin up at home. These will also be posted on the school website for reference.

Please ensure that jumpers are clearly named, as these will no doubt be discarded all over the place once they warm up outside!

UNIFORM REMINDERS

We will be wearing full school uniform again in September. School shoes should be **plain black.** Plain black train style shoes or ankle boots are also acceptable. No logos, fur or coloured stripes.

Please remember that only small **stud** earrings are allowed and pupils must be able to remove these for PE. If your child arrives at school with hooped earrings, they will be asked to remove them.

Don't forget Forsters in Sittingbourne now also stock our uniform along with School Trends online. So you can pop in there for last minute purchases or to try on jumpers etc. They are currently running an appointments system to limit the number of customers in store for everyone's safety.

If you don't wish to buy logoed items, then most supermarkets stock our royal blue school colour. Please do not buy navy as this is not our uniform.

WHAT CAN COME INTO SCHOOL?

- Pupils need to bring their own clearly named water bottle – any bottles with juice will be emptied and replaced with water so please only send water in.
- Please ensure your child has coat, hat, sunscreen as appropriate for the weather as we will continue to learn outside whenever possible.
- Pupils should not bring rucksacks to school. Reading and contact book should be in a book bag or small 'drawstring style' rucksack with lunchboxes and water bottles carried separately if needed. For those pupils who require a change of clothing for 'accidents' please put this in a named carrier bag that can be kept in school until needed.
- Pupils need to bring in a snack for breaktime. The school fruit programme has been suspended and KS2 tuck shop cannot run until restrictions are lifted. Please do not send chocolate or sweets as these will be removed. Fruit or savoury snacks only. No crisps at break please.
- Parents will continue to require an appointment to enter the site and all pupils will be dropped at the gate. If your child is reluctant to come in, please step to one side so that others may enter without delay.
- No other items are permitted in YR-5. All equipment will be provided by the school.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

The children have been divided into 'bubbles' – class sized groups. These 'bubbles' will not mix or share equipment. Children are not expected to social distance from each other in September, but rooms must be organized with desks facing forwards. Carpet spaces will be allocated in YR and we have arranged for new single tables to be in Y1 instead of circular tables.

Staff must make 'best endeavours' to social distance from the pupils and each other. This means that some of our usual 1:1 and small group work will look different.

MASKS

Due to social distancing requirements for adults in school it has been recommended that masks are not worn. However, these will remain optional for staff. The latest guidance states that children under the age of 11 have no need to wear masks. If you choose to send your child in wearing a mask, 2 fresh ones must be provided for after break & lunch and 2 sealable plastic sandwich bags provided for disposal/storage of the morning masks. This is due to the increased risk of infection spreading with the removal and adjustment of PPE. Staff have been trained in how to put on and remove PPE and there is a short training video online which you should encourage your child to watch if they will be wearing a mask.

START AND FINISH TIMES

As usual for their first 2 weeks during their 'flexible fortnight' starting 14th September, **new year R** pupils can be collected at 12 noon if their families choose this.

Families with siblings in different year groups can be dropped off together. **Please drop off with the earliest sibling and pick up with the latest sibling.** Staff will be in class to facilitate this.

Pupils will continue to use external doors to enter their classrooms. Staff will be on hand to guide them and all goodbyes need to be said at the external gates as parents cannot come on site. Parents with blue badges who use the car park, need to remain in their cars. Staff will be there as usual at the gates to welcome the children with a smile. Please note the Y3/4 and Y5/6 classrooms have swapped, but staff will be on doors to help direct children to the right place.

	Internal Gate	Door	Start	End
Rec	Pedestrian	EYFS (EYFS garden)	9:00	3:00
1	Pedestrian	KS1 door (small playground)	9:00	3:10
2	Pedestrian	Walkway door (small playground)	9:00	3:10
3	Wooden Playground	Y3 door	8.50	3:00
4	Metal Playground	Y4 door	8.50	3:00
5	Wooden Playground	Y5 door	8:40	2:50
6	Metal Playground	Y6 door	8:40	2:50

I have attached a simplified version of the detailed guidance provided to staff showing where your child will play, what time they will have break and lunch and who will be supervising them. We have arranged for lunch staff and class staff to be the same for each bubble in order to limit the number of adults entering each bubble to supervise the children.

Our risk assessments are being updated over the holidays to reflect these new arrangements and I am confident that our control measures are sufficient to provide the safest environment possible during these challenging times. The increased hygiene and cleaning measures that have been used successfully during lockdown will continue and we will follow all new guidance provided. If we are not able to follow the guidance in a certain scenario, a risk assessment is created and governors informed.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Those who have already returned to school will have seen and returned the new temporary home school agreement and code of conduct. These will be sent to all parents on 1st September again and must be acknowledged / agreed via ping or email before your child can return to school. These will be placed on the school website on our covid page for your reference during the holidays should you wish to read them in advance. These new rules are to ensure everyone's safety and children who have returned to us have been able to follow them with no problems.

Please be assured that I will continue to make sure that systems, processes and my expectations are clear to enable Mr Krafft and the rest of the staff to focus on bringing joy and learning to the classrooms. In fact 'joy and learning' are expectation number 2! (Safety is always number 1) Having the pupils back this term has shown us that the school spirit is indomitable. Despite the restrictions, the children have thrived and I have every confidence they will continue to do so in September.

The schools will be open from 1st September for any questions should you wish to raise them and we will resend key information. Please feel free to email the office email accounts during the holidays, but be aware that office staff do not work in the holidays so these accounts will only be checked periodically by senior leaders.

Don't forget School starts for pupils in Y1 – 6 on Thursday 3rd September for 2 days of transition work.

Enjoy the summer!