



## LANCHESTER E.P. (Cont.) PRIMARY SCHOOL



Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Well – what a week it has been! I am writing this letter with a huge range of feelings and emotions today:

**Exhaustion** – because like many of you, working from home is challenging, time-consuming and just never-ending.

**Challenging** – because schools are being asked to implement the almost-impossible under tight time schedules and constantly changing rules and expectations.

**Upsetting** – because parents are being asked to make such tricky decisions.

**Pride** – because I genuinely feel our school community is something extra special.

**Excitement** – because we are going to see and meet all our Year 6 children today through a video call.

**Thankfulness** – that I work with such a wonderfully dedicated staff team.

**Gratefulness** – for such supportive and caring parents and carers.

**Understanding** – because our children are finding it so tricky learning from home for such a long period of time.

**Empathy** – as I totally understand that many of you are finding it so challenging trying to home-school your children.

### **Form to be completed by Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 Parents**

We would really appreciate all parents in these key year groups to complete the online form which can be accessed from this link below. Please note – **it is important that you complete a separate form for each child in your care** – the form takes seconds to complete.

No decisions have been made yet about which children or year groups will be accessing school after half term or the organisation. To help the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body in our planning, we need to have an idea of how many parents intend to send their children to school. Obviously, I explained in the letter sent out on Wednesday morning that school as we know it, will be very different for any child accessing this provision.

I am sorry but I realise that there are lots of questions I am still just unable to answer. I cannot tell you which adult will be teaching your child, which children they will be with, which classroom etc. Until we have an idea of numbers of children returning to school, we cannot make any of these decisions about how to organise it all – this will be next week's task.

I realise that parents and carers may well think that they cannot possibly tell us whether they want their child to return to school at the moment as they don't know what 'school' will look like. What I suggest you do if this is the case, is return the form stating that your child will be attending school as it is easier for you to change your mind and not send them, than it is for us to have increased numbers after just a week or two.

Please remember – I will fully support whatever decision parents and carers make. This is a very personal decision for families based upon many different circumstances. I will fully support you all whether you send your child to school or choose not to.

If your child does not return to school in June, please do not worry – work will continue to be set and put on-line for all children and all year groups whether they are in school or not.

For parents and carers of children in Years 2, 3, 4 & 5 – you have not been forgotten! Your child will continue to receive work as usual from their class teachers in exactly the same way as is happening at the moment.

The link for the form is: <http://bit.ly/lanchesterep> This will also be emailed to the relevant parents and carers.

### **Learning by Questions**

This continues to be very popular with children from Years 1 – 6 with over 100 children accessing the live sessions. Due to the popularity of the sessions, from next week, we are putting an additional lesson on every Wednesday at 11am. This is in addition to the two lessons taking place every Tuesday and Thursday at 9.30am. We realise that the timings do not work for every family and hope that by making Wednesday's lesson slightly later in the morning, this will hopefully help all families to access at least one of the lessons each week.

### **Year 6**

We are really looking forward to meeting all of our Year 6 children at 1pm today when we hold our first Zoom meeting with them all! Our Year 6 children should have been sitting their statutory tests this week – never in my wildest dreams did I ever think these tests would not take place! However, I know the children have had mixed emotions that they have not had the opportunity to prove how wonderful they are! They are also missing out on their annual visit to Deano's to celebrate the end of the week.

So, instead, we wrote to the children, gave them a gift voucher to buy pizza and ice cream and we are all meeting virtually at 1pm today! It should be quite a wild gathering I would think! However, it will just be so lovely to see them all. If this is a success, we do hope to be able to organise this with other year groups too.

### **Fun and Fitness Week**

Next week should have been our Fun and Fitness Week in school – another special week in our school calendar. In addition, Thursday is Outdoor Classroom Day. So, next week, the children will be given Maths and English work for every morning but their afternoon tasks will all be based around Fun and Fitness and outdoor education in particular. Please support your children with this different timetable but I do think you will all enjoy the week!

### **Half-Term Holiday**

The school finishes for half term on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May. We will continue to be open during the following week for children of key workers, but will be closed on Bank Holiday Monday – 25<sup>th</sup> May. Apologies for any inconvenience this causes.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your wonderful support and honesty over this last week. The whole staff team continue to be totally overwhelmed by the messages of thanks, support and encouragement we are receiving. They do help to keep us going!

We will be spending next week writing all our policies, procedures and risk-assessments for the gradual re-opening of our school. The organisation for this gradual re-opening will be shared as soon as we can next week.

All we want is the best for our children and to make sure they, and the staff are safe. We will get there! However, I would like to once again, take the opportunity to remind you not to worry or stress about what work is or is not getting completed at home. We will always set the children work to do, but if your child is not in a good place emotionally – leave it. There is plenty of time when we are back to school for us to do all the work with them. No child will be behind or ahead. What we need is for children and parents to try and strike a happy balance of just existing at the moment. This is especially important as we approach Mental Health Awareness Week next week. The words below say it all for me I suppose at the moment:

Restore balance.

Most kids have technology, school and extra-curricular activities covered.

It's time to add:

a pinch of **adventure**, a sprinkle of **green time**, and a big handful of **play**.

With warmest wishes to you and your families,

*Jane Davis*

Mrs Jane Davis  
Head Teacher