



LANCHESTER E.P. (Cont.) PRIMARY SCHOOL



Weekly Bulletin 4 – Friday 25th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

This has to have been one of the most challenging weeks ever for our school; for so many staff, parents and pupils. Monday afternoon brought with it two confirmed cases of coronavirus in Year 3 and Year 5. I am sure you will all join with me in wishing these children all the very best for a speedy recovery. With permission from the family, I can tell you that these two cases were connected and not two isolated cases. We have been thinking of the children and their family all week and they are well on their way to recovery already.

However, as usual, parents have been superb with their response and the need for these year groups to self-isolate for almost two weeks and be home-schooled during this time. I am sure this is something you have all been both anticipating and dreading at the same time. Unfortunately, we are all living with this at the moment and I knew that it was not a matter of 'if' this happens but rather 'when' it happens. We know how difficult this is for many of you who are working from home at the same time as caring for your children and home-schooling them.

It has certainly been a very steep learning curve for us. We have been finding our way with 'flipping' to home-learning literally overnight. Fortunately, we had prepared for this eventuality and one of our training days at the start of the year was all about putting this into practice and establishing our home-learning routines. However, reality is often different than planned and so we have been altering things as the week has progressed to make things work even better – apologies to Year 3 and Year 5 parents - but thank you for bearing with us as we navigate these difficult times together.

When we organised our offer of home learning, we had not anticipated two year groups being off at the same time – this was our first challenge – ensuring Zoom lessons could take place at different times! Then, I don't know why (sorry!) but we had not thought about the need for parents to have time to drop siblings off at school first. But, we have managed to overcome this (mostly!).

I will be sending out a questionnaire to Year 3 and Year 5 parents towards the end of next week asking for your comments about what has worked well with home learning and what could be improved. It will be impossible to please everyone as your circumstances are so wide and varied. But we do hope to be able to adjust and improve this offer all the time.

However, I just want to thank you all for your very calm response when collecting your children on Monday afternoon, under challenging circumstances. It helped enormously. I felt quite emotional when explaining to the children that they were being sent home. They were just so sad and sorry as they were just enjoying being back in school so much. We cannot wait to welcome them all back to school on Friday 2nd October!

Pick Up and Drop Off Times

The start and end of the school day seem to be a lot smoother at the moment. However, the key to this success is good time-keeping. Some parents/children are still arriving almost 10 minutes too early. Please make every effort not to arrive early as this is when the yards/paths become over-crowded. Thank you very much, in advance, for your support in this. It has also been good to see so many of you wearing masks when dropping off and picking up your child. I think this can only help – especially considering we are in the middle of a local lockdown.

Channel 4 Dispatches Filming in School

We have been contacted by Channel 4 Dispatches who would like to come and film in our school to see first-hand the impact the Coronavirus Test and Trace system is having on the school, pupils and staff. The programme is about the decisions taken by Government since the lifting of lockdown and will examine their effect in helping to control the spread of Covid-19.

The production company Quicksilver has rigorous procedures in place to ensure any filming will be carried out safely and following their own, and Channel 4's, Coronavirus guidelines. They will also have their own consent forms to be completed for any bubbles of children who will be filmed – these will follow next week prior to them coming to school.

As well as filming with myself and the staff, they would like to hear from any families who are waiting for tests or have had difficulties trying to get tests and see how this has affected you and your family.

If you have any questions or want to get in touch ahead of time to share your experiences you can contact Anna Davis on: anna.davis@qsmmedia.tv or 07795 188474. (No relation at all – total coincidence that she has the same name as one of my daughters!)

Wrap Around Care

Thank you to all those who have completed the online form. I can confirm that our wrap-around care will continue from next week with the new hours of 7.45am until 4.30pm. I realise the hours are shorter than in the past but numbers do not currently warrant longer hours and we cannot guarantee the staffing either. Due to current restrictions and guidelines, all places MUST be booked and paid for in advance. If you need to access this childcare for next week and have not yet completed the form, please just email the school office who will get this booked onto ParentPay for you.

Homework

We are continuing to review our homework procedures. We realise that there are times when children are absent from school or misplace their homework. To address this and to ensure that children continue to access eSchools on a regular basis, we are making changes to the practical side of where homework is stored. From next week, all children will be set an electronic quiz on eSchools to complete every week. Your child's class teacher will be explaining this to the children prior to the first quiz being set. In addition to the quiz, paper-based homework and any spellings or phonics work set will also be saved on eSchools. As a result, all homework can be accessed online at all times! Please note – spellings are currently only set for KS2.

Home Learning

Many thanks to all parents who have completed the online questionnaire about access to technology in the event of a child needing to self-isolate. If you haven't already done so, please complete it by the end of the weekend so they can be analysed.

Captain Chemistry

Our Year 4 children had some fabulous Science lessons this week with a visit from Captain Chemistry! He certainly knows how to interest and inspire the children. He will be returning to Year 5 and Year 3 in the near future too and I know it will be worth the wait!

Early Years News (Nursery and Reception)

We hope that you are all managing to access your child's updates via **Evidence Me**. If you require an additional email address to be added to the account so another family member can receive updates, please let us know. We have had quite a few parents uploading observations about their child's interests and achievements at home. These are very helpful in helping us to build a picture of your child, so thank you! If

you need any help in uploading observations, please see the following link:
<http://help.evidence.me/evidence-me-help-for-parents/>

Can we remind parents that children should arrive for school dressed appropriately for the weather and always have a coat with them? We play outside in all weathers and want your child to be able to comfortably explore the learning environment both inside and outside. All children now have wellies in school and they will be changing into them and back into their shoes every day. If you could spend a few minutes each day supporting them in learning how to put their shoes on, it would be most appreciated.

Reception children now have reading books coming home so please ensure that they have their book bag in school every day so that they have access to their book when needed. Thanks for your helpful comments in their reading diaries. Look out for our video about early reading and phonics coming soon. As always, please ask if you have any questions about reading books.

All of the Reception children have now had the chance to visit our Forest School. We hope you enjoyed seeing the photos of what they got up to on Twitter. Remember to follow us on Twitter: @LanchesterEP to see daily updates of what is going on in each year group in school.

Residential – Dates

None of us have any idea what will be happening with residential next year. But, we have got certain trips in the diary in the hope that they may be able to go ahead.

We do still have a week of skiing booked for children in Years 4,5 & 6 – this is the week beginning Saturday 6th March 2021. You may want to make a note of this date just in case it can go ahead. No money or deposits will be taken at the moment.

For Years 5 & 6 we have a week of outdoor adventure activities at PGL booked for Monday 28th June to Friday 2nd July.

What to do if your child presents with COVID symptoms

If your child develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19), they should **STAY AT HOME**. Call school at once and notify us. However, if they develop symptoms at school, they will be sent home.

Anyone with symptoms should stay at home for at least 7 days and book a test. This can be done by calling 119 or through the NHS website: www.nhs.uk/coronavirus. The rest of the household needs to stay at home for 14 days to self-isolate.

All children attending school will have access to a test if they display symptoms of COVID-19 and are **encouraged to get tested**.

The symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- the loss or change of their sense of taste or smell

Any pupil who develops any of the above symptoms should be tested. There is no need for their households to have a test, unless they are also symptomatic.

Children may feel unwell with a common cold, sore throat, headache or upset stomach. These are not symptoms and therefore a test is not required and self-isolation is not required.

Once the test has been taken, if the test is negative, all isolation ends and the child and the household can return to school and work. Please inform us and send confirmation of the negative test.

If the test is positive, the child remains in isolation alongside their family and the latest government guidance will need to be followed. The social group for that child or staff member will be contacted and we will engage with PHE and Test and Trace.

Positive Thinking

We are all experiencing some very challenging times in our lives and I would like to leave you all with a touch of positivity each week.

***When you face difficult times, know that challenges are not sent to destroy you.
They're sent to promote, increase and strengthen you.***

As usual, if there is anything at all that you would like to talk about, or that is concerning you, please do not hesitate to contact me at school. We are here to help and will get back to you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Davis

Mrs Jane Davis
Head Teacher