



EXWICK HEIGHTS PRIMARY SCHOOL



Summer Term – April 26th 2021

Website: www.exwickheights.devon.sch.uk

Dear Parents & Carers,

It has been a great start to the term – the children have been working extremely hard and have really impressed us with their positive attitudes. The gorgeous weather that we have been enjoying has really helped us – it has been wonderful to get outdoors once more!

Covid 19 – The rate of infection here in Exeter is currently low, which is fantastic news, but I recognise that we must continue to be vigilant to protect our community. I would like to remind everyone that the following key symptoms may be an indication of Covid 19:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

If you have any of the above symptoms of COVID-19, however mild, your whole household must immediately self-isolate and a PCR test must be arranged. The results of PCR tests are now far quicker than when the pandemic first began and so hopefully anyone in this position will rapidly know the outcome of their test. If the result is negative, then your household can end self-isolation. However, if you receive a positive result, you and anyone you live with must self-isolate to avoid spreading the infection to other people. The self-isolation period includes the day your symptoms started (or the day you had the test, if you do not have symptoms) and the next 10 full days. If you were already self-isolating and had a test because you've been in close contact with someone who tested positive, your self-isolation period restarts if you test positive.

We politely ask all families to notify us immediately if a child attending the school site has tested positive to enable us to track and trace potential contacts. The school has the following email address for this purpose. Please note that this should only be used to **report a positive result for a child at our school only:** reportpositive@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk

As a school, we are continuing to follow our existing risk assessment this term. This is to prevent changing the routine for the children without explanation. We are keen to take every step that we can to maintain safety and thank you for your support with this. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Safe Play – As restrictions begin to ease, our children are beginning to be able to enjoy playing outside once more. I thought it might be sensible to ask that we remind children of safe play and what we mean by this. After such a long period of lockdown, things that we take for granted, such as awareness of space, can be impacted upon. Children may also need to be reminded about where they are permitted to play and how they must manage any risks (such as water or traffic).

It would also be sensible to speak to your child or children about the pandemic and explain that some households may be naturally more cautious about children mixing or playing outside. It is important that children understand that if another child is not able to play, it is not a rejection but is simply about protecting families.

Magnets – I have recently been made aware of a new toy ‘craze’ consisting of very small, powerful round magnets which join together to make shapes. Apparently the magnets are brightly coloured and resemble a sweet. Magnets can cause significant injuries to children when swallowed and so I wanted to raise awareness amongst our community and remind parents that such toys are not permitted in school. Thank you.

Building deliveries – This morning, two lorries were parked on Gloucester Road, delivering equipment to the building site next to Exwick Hill. I have met with the construction company today and have received an apology for the disruption that was caused. The construction company have apparently asked all of the companies delivering to the old Exwick Middle School site to avoid delivering around the start and end of the school day. They have also requested that arctic lorries are not used because of congestion. Unfortunately, today’s delivery driver had not been made aware of this! I would like to thank everyone for their understanding and for their care this morning, which helped to make a dangerous situation on our roads much safer!

Independence – As we begin the summer term, we’re keen to help all of our children to become more independent. This week, I have been fortunate to have spent my lunchtimes supporting our very youngest children, from our nursery classroom, enjoying their lunches. In just the first four days, I have witnessed incredible progress as the children learn, initially with help and then independently, to open food items such as biscuits and crisp packets. Sometimes, it can be quicker to help by stepping in and doing something for a child – but it is important that we allow them to make safe mistakes to help them to learn. Could your child complete chores around the home? Perhaps older children may be allowed more independence when travelling to school or visiting friends? Scaffolding the steps required to complete a task may help to make this more manageable. For instance, in the example I shared earlier regarding our nursery pupils opening packets. The first step was learning to ‘pinch’ the sides of the packet, the second was to pull (initially with an adult supporting, and then independently).

Sports Days – We are keen to organise ‘Covid Safe’ Sports Days this year. These will be held outside, and each Sports Day will involve just one year group. We hope that parents will be permitted to attend but this will be dependent of the Government’s Roadmap, with regard to large gatherings after the 21st of June. I will write to each year group to share dates for each proposed Sports Day in the coming weeks, ensuring that there is at least five weeks’ notice for parents.

Year 6 End of Year Activities – This year, we will be organising a week of activities for our Year 6 children, hopefully culminating in a sleepover for the children here at school. Again, this will be dependent on the Government’s Covid 19 guidelines but we wanted to inform parents that it is something that we are firmly planning for!

School Uniform As summer approaches, please can I remind parents that the wearing of shoes with heels or sling-backs is not permitted; they can cause nasty accidents and are not in line with our school uniform policy. Sensible flat shoes, suitable for active playtimes, are strongly recommended. With the variable weather that Exwick seems prone to, please can I also ask that children still bring a coat or waterproof to school – just in case! Earrings are permitted, but these should be small studs or sleepers – decorative, dangly earrings are not permitted.

Lost Property Each year group has their own lost property collection. Please can all items (clothing, lunch boxes etc) be **clearly named** to help us to quickly return any lost items. Thank you for your support with this!

PE Kit With the warmer weather approaching, there are more opportunities for extra PE slots outside including practices for the forthcoming sports days. Please ensure your child has their PE kit in school every day so they can play a full and active part in our sports programmes.

Sunhats and Suncream Please help us to protect your children further when outside this summer. Please provide them with a sunhat making sure it is clearly labelled with their name. Regarding sun cream, we ask that you apply a high factor sun cream to your children before they come to school and do not send creams or lotions in with them. However, if your child has a particular sensitivity to sunlight, please speak to their class teacher to discuss this further.

Some children have eyes sensitive to the sun, especially if they suffer from hayfever, once again, we are happy for them to wear sunglasses to school. Please make sure that these are plastic because of health and safety issues. Prescription sunglasses or reactive lens glasses are also acceptable.

Change of address/telephone number/email/allergies etc If your contact details change, please let us know as a matter of priority so we can keep in touch at all times.

Staffing: Mrs Cross, one of our Year two teaching assistants has received a richly deserved new role within the Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust, joining the admin team at West Exe supporting the SLT and pastoral services. This is a great opportunity for Mrs Cross and one which I know she will flourish in! I'm also delighted that she will continue to work with us through her new role within the Trust. Mrs Coombes is also sadly stepping back from the amazing work that she completes in schools, creating amazing displays for our children and supporting Foxhayes Playclub. Mrs Coombes has worked at Exwick Heights for many years, bringing our school environment to life with her creations. Both Mrs Cross and Mrs Coombes have been absolute delights to work with and will be sorely missed by each of us at Exwick Heights. We wish them both every happiness and success for the future.

With warm regards,



Mrs C. Neal

Headteacher

