

EXWICK HEIGHTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Autumn Term – March 9th 2021

Website: www.exwickheights.devon.sch.uk

Dear Parents & Carers,

It has been so fantastic to welcome all children back to our school this week. They have brightened each day with their giggles and I have been so impressed by the way that they have settled in. After such a long and disrupted period, they have adjusted incredibly well. They are really enjoying being able to play with friends once more and it is a real privilege to see them.

I am really keen that we each help to keep ourselves on track to return to normality. I feel like my newsletters are constantly asking more of you but feel that it is so important, during the pandemic, that we all ensure that we take every step that we can to protect both our families and the community. Please help us to keep our community as safe as possible (and prevent the need for any further school closures) by:

- **Not gathering**

The Government Guidance is clear that we are currently only permitted to meet with one person outside of our household to exercise or for recreation. The school run is not exempt from this and so I need to ask all of our families to ensure that they continue to social distance when bringing children to and from school. I have noticed a number of adults gathering just outside of our school gates on both sites for conversations – please help us by keeping interactions brief and distanced until it is safe (and legal) for us to behave differently.

- **Wearing Face Coverings**

With a high number of people attending the school site at the beginning and end of the school day, we strongly recommend that adults wear a face covering when completing the school run because of the high number of potential contacts whilst completing the journey. All adults entering the school site must wear a face covering unless they have evidence of being medically exempt. Please make sure that if a member of your friends or family are collecting on your behalf, they are aware of this requirement. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

- **Not arriving before the school is open**

We have had some very eager children arriving at the school gates prior to 8.30am, which is when our site is open. Please can I request that if you are early for school, that you wait away from the premises to prevent a gathering. Some of our older pupils have arrived at the school gates very early historically to socialise with their friends prior to the school day. This inevitably leads to congestion and so we need to ask parents and carers to explain to their children that this is not safe currently, to ensure that they are not waiting prior to 8.30am. We are sadly not insured to have members of the public on site before this time unless they are attending Foxhayes Playclub or a school organised event.

- **Only one adult per family**

Again, we ask that only one adult per family completes the school run to minimise the number of people around our school. If more than one adult completes the school run, we politely ask that one waits away from our school site to prevent congestion. Please make sure that if a member of your friends or family are collecting on your behalf, they are aware of this requirement – there were a number of grandparents attending yesterday who were apparently unaware!

Messages for School

Thank you all so much for emailing and telephoning school to share messages rather than speaking to staff on duty. We really have appreciated your support with this, to help protect both you and staff from risk.

Highways

If you would like to report any highway problems that you notice around our school, then the following website allows you to do so quickly: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/> This enables you to report everything from potholes to parking issues. The council are very quick to respond but do need to be informed of difficulties to address them.

Booking Lunches – School Gateway

Just a quick reminder that all school dinners need to be ordered and paid for prior to the start of the school day for which it is ordered. School Gateway is a simple app, which can be downloaded. Please contact the school office if you would like any support in using it.

Year 6 Hoodies – We will be writing to our Year 6 parents and carers before the end of term to share information about Leavers Hoodies and how these can be ordered. Whilst we recognise that we are only half way through the school year, it seems sensible to plan ahead to make sure that everyone gets what they want!

Comic Relief - This year, Comic Relief is being held on **Friday 19th March**. All children (and staff) can come to school in their own clothes as we are holding a non-uniform day to mark the occasion and allow a little fun and ‘normality’ for our children. Traditionally, we would collect donations for this charity on the day. However, we recognise the huge financial pressure that Covid 19 has put on families and so want to be very clear that there is no expectation – children can wear non-uniform regardless of whether or not they have made a donation. Anyone who would like to make a donation can do so through the School Gateway app.

Please note, wearing a red nose is a traditional way to celebrate Comic Relief but we need to ensure that our children are kept as safe as possible. In a classroom with many children, it is very easy for a red nose to be picked up and worn by another child in error – which is not ideal in a pandemic! Please keep this in mind when selecting outfits for school on the 19th of March, particularly with our younger pupils.

Junior Bake Off Applications - Junior Bake Off is a popular television show, where young bakers share their baking skills. If you would like to enter a young, budding baker into this competition, they need to be aged between 9 -15 years old. Filming for successful applicants will take place from July 2021, and the closing date for applications is Sunday 28th March 2021.

Interested bakers can apply online at - WWW.APPLYFORJUNIORBAKEOFF.CO.UK

Tiredness

Finally, please be reassured that it is very understandable that your child or children will be extremely tired this week. Our school is a busy environment and children will understandably feel exhausted at the end of each school day - I suspect that it will take a few weeks for a fully open school to become

more familiar and manageable for our children. Please don't be surprised if your child is overtired, reassure them that this is quite normal and entirely understandable!

Please remember to contact us at any time if you have any questions or concerns.

Mrs C. Neal
Headteacher