

Mablins Lane Community Primary School Newsletter ~ 7th January 2021

Dear Parents and Children

Happy New Year

"No one would have believed, in the last years of the nineteenth century that human affairs were being watched from the timeless worlds of space.

No one could have dreamed we were being scrutinized, as someone with a microscope studies creatures that swarm and multiply in a drop of water. Few men even considered the possibility of life on other planets and yet, across the gulf of space, minds immeasurably superior to ours regarded this Earth with envious eyes, and slowly and surely, they drew their plans against us."
(Jeff Wayne: 'War of the Worlds')

No one would have believed that 12 months ago the world would have been taken over by a pandemic!

In March we were optimistic as we closed the school to all except Key worker and vulnerable children. We soon realized that we were in for a long haul and put in various measures to support all our school family. June saw a glimmer of light and we started to welcome further children back in to school. By July we had clear plans in place to welcome all year groups back to school in September.

The Autumn Term presented a new way of working, but children, parents and staff soon settled in to a new routine. Over the course of the term (15 weeks) we saw only 2 cases of Covid that had a direct impact on the school. This is impressive considering the school population of over 500 families.

As a new more virulent form of the virus emerged over December there were concerns in the media around schools re-opening in January. The teaching unions lobbied for clearer guidance with the NEU asking teachers to work from home until there could be clarity. Last Sunday the School Leadership Team (SLT) met to organise the return of pupils to start the term. Monday brought challenge for parents due to the late notice, but I can assure you all that we were working as swiftly as we could given the late notice of the information.

We believed we had a clear supportive plan! BUT that all changed at 8pm on Monday evening when the Prime

Minister announced that schools would close with immediate effect.

Another late night SLT meeting allowed us to get a provisional plan in place and get communication out to parents. Some schools decided to close for a day or two in order to organise teaching and learning but as we knew this would not be helpful to parents at all, we resolved that we would stay open and be as supportive as we could be.

It has been a very challenging few days and I would like to thank my SLT for their support in preparation and planning. I would like to thank the whole teaching team for their swift and speedy response to the learning needs. The office team have been excellent in distributing messages and coordinating responses. Our site team have ensured that we remain safe by increasing the cleaning and spending much time gritting as yes, we have hit a cold snap too! The kitchen and Midday staff have worked to ensure that all children have access to a hot meal each day if required.

I would like to especially thank you as parents and our lovely children. The many kinds words and supportive messages that we have received have been much welcomed. Queries, requests, technical issues, password problems, device compatibility and logistics have all taken up a great deal of time, but I would like to thank you all for your patience and support. The speed of change over this week has been immense but when I

see what is already in place and on offer I am overwhelmed. That is down to the support and dedication of our Mablins Family and I am very proud to be the Headteacher.

Thank you ALL.



Clap for Heroes

On that note I will start by letting people know that the 'Clap for Carers' will return this evening but now re-named as 'Clap for Heroes'. People are invited to clap at 8pm on a Thursday evening. The aim is to "lift the spirit of all of us" including "all who are pushing through this difficult time."



School Attendance – Key workers

The school is now closed to the vast majority of pupils the exception being those children who have an EHCP, are classed as vulnerable or whose parents have a critical frontline key worker role.

I have been inundated with requests for key worker places. Compared to the last National Lockdown, many more businesses remain open and parents are being requested to attend their workplace. This creates a real challenge for us as our aim was to keep the number of children in school as low as possible. We currently have 149 children on our register (compared to 25 last time). It has taken some time for me to work fairly through all the requests and I apologise if you have had to wait for a reply. All requests that were received on Tuesday 5th and Wednesday 6th before 3:30pm have been processed. If you have made a request after this time then please bear with me, they will be processed before the end of the week.

We have established a pod for each year group on this occasion with appropriate staffing to cover. Due to the high take-up of places some year groups are at capacity and we are unable to accept any more children to the register. Children need only to attend on the days that parents are in work. We do not need shift patterns, we will code the register accordingly and the place is secure once a name is on the register.

If your situation changes then please let me know as this may release a place for someone on the waiting list. Final plea: **ONLY COME TO SCHOOL ON THE DAYS YOU NEED TO!**

Uniform

If your child is attending school then they should wear school uniform each day. The teacher may ask for a PE kit to be worn if that has been planned – this should be suitable and warm given the current weather conditions. All children **MUST** bring their coat as they will be going outside for fresh air breaks.

School Lunches

The school kitchen will be open providing a hot meal each day. Chris our assistant cook is running the kitchen and she has adjusted the menu with one choice each day. An alternative will be provided for dietary requirements. If children wish to bring a packed lunch they will eat this in their class area.

Remote Learning



We are very impressed with the speed by which our teachers have implemented our remote learning policy.

Children from year 1 to year 6 have all got Office 365 Teams log in details and how to access this. Children working from home will be able to access home learning through Office Teams. Children in EYFS will access home learning via the VLE on the school website please see;



School VLE

Teachers will inform parents using DOJO/TEAMS of the work that will be set each week. Parents and pupils will also be sent a



timetable of the week so that you know what is expected each day. The Department for Education states that schools should set work that is of equivalent length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school, and as a minimum:

- primary: **3 hours a day**, on average, across the school cohort

This week has been a steep learning curve for teachers in school and we have had to quickly adjust to preparing work and lessons that will be delivered remotely on TEAMS and the VLE.

We thank parents for their patience and understanding whilst we have got these platforms up and running. The children have been amazing this week too and have really engaged with the assignments and work set. It has also been great to see the work and to read the feedback given. So many children are enjoying the 'live' lessons and it is great to see so many children interacting and having a real go at the work from home!

Please could we ask that parents remind their children that the chat function on TEAMS is to only discuss school work and not there just to have a chat, sorry! We also need to be mindful that when live lessons are happening on TEAMS children should apply the same rules of behaviour that they do in school, we appreciate that this may be more tricky to do so at home, but good manners and listening skills still have to apply.



If you need further help with Teams then please contact us at school on deputy@mablinslane.cheshire.sch.uk or see this [Support Guidance for Teams](#)

Did you know that....You can also access TEAMS on Xbox and PlayStation consoles?!



DfE help with technology – Only for Years 3 to Year 6

As part of the Government programme to help families who do not have access to a device, we have been allocated a small number of laptops.

At this point only High Schools are allowed to place orders for additional laptops.



Primary Schools cannot place orders until the DfE send an invitation to place an order. They will prioritise areas of deprivation first. We have been warned that our invite may be a week or so away yet.

Once we have been able to place our order for additional equipment we will be able to work with a limited number of families to loan equipment. We will advise parents when we are in a position to loan equipment.

We have received a number of requests for the loan of equipment. If you have not already requested to loan equipment and do not have access to a device – please email admin@mablinslane.cheshire.sch.uk

The BBC are also offering technical support for families without laptops, please see;

www.bbc.co.uk/makingadifference

Increasing data allowances on mobile devices

The DfE have also introduced a pilot offer to increase mobile data allowances for children and young people.

The scheme is open to children and young people who:-

- don't have access to a fixed broadband connection
- cannot afford the additional data needed to access educational resources or social care services



- have access to a mobile device that uses a participating network (list below)
- are facing disruption to their face-to-face education, or have been advised not to attend school

To qualify, children must

- have no broadband connection at home
- cannot afford additional data

One of the following must also apply

- Child should be in Years 3 – 11 and have had their face to face education disrupted.
- Child is clinically extremely vulnerable and needs to shield
- Child lives in a home that's been advised to shield because a family member is clinically extremely vulnerable
- Child cannot attend school – even though it is open – because restrictions prevent it

Participating networks are as follows

- EE
- Sky Mobile
- Smarty
- Tesco Mobile
- Three
- Virgin Mobile

Offers depend on the network provider. We are told that the provider will text when the free data has been activated and when the free data will end. The data can be used to tether a mobile to another device for internet access.

(Please note that Sky Mobile will not include Pay as you go Customers in the offer)

If you meet the criteria and would like us to submit a request for an increase in mobile data allowance, please email admin@mablinslane.cheshire.sch.uk with the following information:

- account holder name
- their mobile phone number (this should always start with '07')
- Name of mobile network provider
- Confirmation whether the account holder has a contract or a Pay-as-you-go deal.

We need these details to submit a request for an increase in data with the relevant mobile network.

Account holders with monthly contracts need to be over the age of 18.

Please read the following [Privacy Notice](#)

Please note that the school are simply able to submit information. We cannot answer specific questions about entitlement and we have no responsibility for how the data is used.

On-Line safety

As we are now using an on-line platform, please can I ask parents to be mindful of security?

We have had an on-line racist incident this week. This has been reported accordingly. Mablins Lane does not tolerate any form of prejudice or bullying. We ask that parents monitor all use of technology and support us in keeping all our children and families safe.



SATs

We welcomed the news yesterday from the DFE informing us that SATs will not take place this year for Y2 or Y6. All assessment this year will be 'Teacher Assessment'.

Residential Visits

We have made the decision this week to refund any money linked to the Y6 residential visit. Mrs Jones will be working through the list over the coming week. We do not anticipate any overnight visits for the remainder of this school year. We will closely monitor the situation.

Kids Planet

Breakfast and after school club has stayed open for parents who need to drop off and collect outside of school hours. Kids Planet have measures in place to safeguard the children, and reduce contact between pods. Pre-School also remains open at this time.



Covid-19

Although there is a new strain the guidance for Covid still gives the main symptoms as;

- New and persistent dry cough
- High temperature
- Loss of taste /smell

Should your child present with any of these symptoms they should **not go out**, but you should **seek a test**.

YOUR CHILD SHOULD NOT ATTEND SCHOOL IF THEY ARE SHOWING ANY OF THE ABOVE SYMPTOMS OR IF ANYBODY IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD IS SHOWING THOSE SYMPTOMS.

We did so well last term and would like to start the New Year in the same manner. Please follow the guidance to help keep everybody safe.

IMPORTANT

Covid- 19 Telephone Number

If your child has a Covid test and it is positive you must inform the school immediately by calling our Covid telephone line on:

MABLINS LANE COVID POSITIVE TEST REPORTING
TELEPHONE NO.

07415 005702

This number is **ONLY** for reporting a positive test.

Applying for a September 2021 School place!

Parents of children who will be starting school in September 2021 have until **15th January 2021**.

Free School Meals

Are you entitled to Free School Meals? Go to the link below to see if you meet the specified criteria. Applying for FSM attracts over £1000



of funding in to school which helps to support the children, for example helping to fund your child's school trips.

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>



Year Group - Email Address
Mablins Lane CP School

Please use **ONLY** the following email addresses to contact your child's class teacher. They will respond during the school working hours of between 9.00am and 4.30pm, please note that many of the teachers are still in school and teaching key worker children.

eyfs@mablinslane.cheshire.sch.uk

year1@mablinslane.cheshire.sch.uk

year2@mablinslane.cheshire.sch.uk

year3@mablinslane.cheshire.sch.uk

year4@mablinslane.cheshire.sch.uk

year5@mablinslane.cheshire.sch.uk

year6@mablinslane.cheshire.sch.uk

URGENT APPEAL - Crossing Patrol

Unfortunately a replacement has yet to be found for our crossing patrol. The vacancy has been advertised by Cheshire Transport on the Cheshire East website. If you or any one you know, would be interested in this job then please apply accordingly to Cheshire East.



In the interim, I have to inform parents that the crossing will not be supervised so additional care will be required.

School Meals - Cashless Payments

Please can we remind parents about the Cheshire East epayments system. Payments for school meals **should where possible be made online** via the [Cheshire East School Epayments Portal](#)

If parents are unsure how to do this then please ask at the school office or refer to the [online parent guide](#) below.

And Finally

The chicken from under the desk!! As I wrote the last newsletter I had one of our hens in a box under my desk. After a visit to the vets where nothing untoward could be diagnosed, 'Poorly Penny' has spent Christmas and New Year recuperating with some of my own hens. They have looked after her and she seems much brighter and better. Hopefully she will return to school when the weather is a little warmer.



Stay Home

Stay Safe.

Take care, look after yourselves.

With kind regards

Justine Joule - Headteacher

