



Tanners Wood JMI School

ESTABLISHED 1952

4th September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back to a new academic year! I hope that everyone has had a well-earned and restful summer holiday. A warm welcome to some new members of staff; Mr Biswell class teacher in Rowan, Mrs Glover a Teaching Assistant working in Cypress Class and Mrs Turone a trainee teacher, who will be working in Pine class alongside Mrs Craggs.

We also welcome many new Reception and Nursery children and their families to our school they have all made a positive start and have settled in well.

This first newsletter should be read in conjunction with the information sent out on 16th July 2020. It is attached for your reference.

Hand Sanitiser

From Monday 7th September, we would like all parents to send in a small bottle (mini pocket size please) of hand sanitiser for children to keep in their trays. This will reduce the number of times children need to be out of their chairs and waiting for adults to distribute the gel. Please can all parents send in a named, non-scented alcohol based bottle for their child to use (at least 70% otherwise the gel is ineffective).

Drop off/Pick up

Over the last two days, the vast majority parents have adapted to the new drop off and pick up routine. Whilst we appreciate it is not a perfect system, we need your continued support. A few things that parents can do and the school will implement:

- Please do not arrive earlier than your allotted time as this has meant there are crowds outside gates and many parents have expressed concerns
- As previously advised, if you are a parent who has more than one child, please drop off at the later time and then use the safest and most direct route to any other classroom you need to drop other children off at
- A reminder that ONE adult only should accompany children to school - we will remind you of this and need you to support us to keep everyone safe and socially distanced
- Mr Gair is working hard to open all gates in a timely manner, please be patient with him!
- I will ask teachers to allow children to enter and exit more swiftly so we can avoid queuing. Please can parents keep discussions with teachers to a minimum
- Can all parents respect the marked area outside each classroom and NOT stand in the semi-circle
- We will put some additional marking to support social distancing. If you use Gate 7 to enter the school please then use the school drive way to exit (we will mark this with some arrows)
- Where possible children in Years 5 and 6 can now be dropped to the school gate (if you feel they are able to) to avoid extra adults coming onto site. Only children who have a consent form to walk home will be allowed to leave the classroom without an adult at the end of the day.

Normally, we encourage an open door policy at the school and this is still possible when you see the class teacher at the classroom door if you have a quick question. Given the current situation with the need to socially distance, we will not be inviting parents into classrooms, so discussions will take place outside. Parents can of course telephone the school to request teachers call them back if the query is of a confidential nature. Please can I request parents are patient and understand that teachers will only be able to respond outside the teaching day within a reasonable timeframe.

Clubs

There will be no clubs or after school events running for the first half term. Time Out continues to offer before and after school provision.

Start of academic year – Welcome to your new class meetings

We will not be holding our usual Meet The Teacher sessions this year. Instead, each teacher will upload a Powerpoint to share important class information as a welcome to the new academic and these will be available on the school website on Tuesday 15th September.

The focus will be on sharing learning expectations for the relevant year group. This information has already been shared with Reception and Nursery parents. It is important that all parents attend if possible so that they can find out about the year ahead.

Key Dates for the Term

A list of key dates will be sent out on next week's newsletter. ***It is vital that all parents read our weekly newsletters so that you are aware of events and any changes that may take place.*** This is even more important this year as things may change very quickly related to school events.

I have included a reminder of school dates for the coming year; please keep these dates in mind when making any arrangements for holidays. Dates for 2021-22 will be shared later on in the term.

Autumn Term 2020

Half term: Monday 26th October – Friday 30th October
Term Ends: Friday 18th December 1.30pm

Spring Term 2021

Children begin: Monday 4th January
Half term: Monday 15th – Friday 19th February
Term Ends: Friday 26th March 1.30pm

Summer Term 2021

Children begin: Monday 12th April
May Bank Holiday: Monday 3rd May
Year 6 SATS: week beginning 10th May 2021
Year 2 SATS- during May 2021
Inset day: Friday 28th May
Half term: Monday 31st May – Friday 4th June
Year 1 Phonics testing/Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check- week beginning 7th June 2021
Term Ends: Friday 16th July 1.30pm

Attendance

We are delighted that the vast majority of children have returned to school this term. We do not underestimate the challenges that so many families have had to overcome during the lockdown in preparing for the return to school. As a school we will continue to take all the necessary safeguards to keep your child, staff and the whole school community safe.

The overall attendance record of the vast majority of our pupils is good and I very much appreciate your support in respecting and supporting the school's policy on attendance. Last year's whole school attendance improved to 96.5 % (up to March 2020) from 96% the previous year.

You will no doubt understand that as the Head Teacher I have a duty, along with the school Governors, to promote the highest attendance levels possible. The school is set very high attendance targets by the Government; and our attendance data is regularly scrutinised by the Local Authority and Ofsted and is one of the factors by which they measure the success of the school. The academic progress of a child, whatever his/her level of academic ability, will be adversely affected if they miss school. ***Please take this into consideration when planning trips in the future.*** Our Attendance policy is available on our school website. There is also an attached letter for all parents to read carefully. Given that there has been huge disruption in the education for all children this year, good attendance is essential in supporting children to catch up on missed learning.

Please note that when we have concerns about safety and well-being of children we will follow our safeguarding procedures which may result in home visits.

Absence and Illness

If your child is absent for any reason, please leave a message on the school's absence line before 9.15am for each day of absence (option 1 on the main school number).

If your child has been physically sick or has diarrhoea, he/she should be kept at home for a period of **48 hours after the last episode**, to prevent the spreading of infections.

If a child is unwell with **Covid-19 symptoms then they MUST not come to school** and you should inform the school office immediately.

Request for Leave of Absence

The Department for Education has clear guidance on school attendance regulations. This makes it clear that **'Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances'**. Head Teachers no longer have the discretion to allow up to 10 days in a school year for a family holiday or to agree extended leave for parents to visit their country of origin. If you believe your circumstances may be exceptional, then please discuss your request with me before making final plans. I will review each request for absence carefully, consulting with the Local Authority's Attendance Improvement Officer where necessary, and give you an answer as soon as possible. If you need to make a request for leave, then please ask the school office for a form. We ask that all requests are put in writing using this form **at least two weeks prior to any leave.**

Coming Into and Leaving School

Children who ride scooters and bikes must dismount by the school gate and walk their bikes and scooters into the school. ***It is also important that pre-school children do not use scooters or bikes in the playground. Scooters and bikes cannot be left on school premises unless they are locked away in the bike shelter which is located at the top of the junior field. The school does not accept any responsibility for them and they are left entirely at parents' risk. The play equipment must not be used by children outside school times. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure they enforce this with their children.***

Uniform

It is essential that all children wear the correct school uniform every day. **A reminder - black shoes are an essential part of our uniform and children must not wear trainers.** The school policy is available on the school website.

<http://tannerswood.herts.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Uniform-Policy-June-2018-1.pdf>

We will contact parents of children who are not wearing the correct uniform in person or via a reminder slip. A few other reminders;

- Hair fashion accessories should not be worn. Small hairbands and clips are acceptable, school colours only.
- Long hair must be tied back
- Nail varnish must not be worn to school
- Hooped earrings must not be worn for health and safety reasons. Jewellery is not allowed, this includes wearing wristbands. Small watches are permitted.

Snacks

A reminder that if Junior children bring in a mid-morning snack, it must be a healthy one and consist of a **piece of fruit**. Crisps, biscuits and sweets are not acceptable and children will not be allowed these. Infant children continue to receive a 'free' piece of fruit/vegetable at break time each morning. As there are some children across the school with nut allergies, nut based products must not be sent in. Please note many chocolate spreads contain nuts.

Parent / Teacher Consultations

Parent/Teacher consultation sessions will be held in the week before the October half-term holidays on Monday 19th October 3.30-6pm and Wednesday 21st October 5.30-8pm. Due to Covid-19, this term class teachers will be making telephone calls to parents rather than face to face meetings. The exact details will be shared in the coming weeks along with dates for spring term 2021 consultations which will be advised in due course.

Special Education Needs

Parents of children who have a Special Educational Needs Support Plan will, in addition, be invited to meet with teachers on a termly basis, to review the progress that their child is making and to set new targets. The SEND review consultation meeting this term is on **Wednesday 23rd September from 3.30 - 4.20pm.** A letter will be sent out if applicable.

Communication

Parents will have signed the Home School Agreements (found on the school's website) which sets out how the school and parents cooperate. The vast majority of parents are hugely supportive of us as a school, however on occasion parent actions have fallen short of the HSA. I politely request that all parents communicate with all staff in an acceptable way. I am privileged to have such a hard working staff group at Tanners and it is important that they feel safe and respected in carrying out their work, so that their well-being and morale remains positive. It is very difficult to build up such a successful team who everyday go over and beyond for the benefit of the children and I want to sustain and retain each member of staff. I sincerely hope all parents will support both myself and our governors in this. Equally you can expect all staff to treat all parents with the same respect.

In June 2020 the latest Home School Agreement was signed by the vast majority of parents. A further ParentMail will be sent to those who have not yet signed it.

The last two days have been very positive and the children have adjusted extremely well in the return to school. We are all very proud of how they have adhered to our safety procedures. Thank you to all the parents who have also adapted and appreciated the challenges we are facing.

I have no doubt that this year will present many challenges! However, if we work together we will be able to support the learning of all our children alongside maintaining the safety and well-being of the whole school community.

Finally...

This is certainly a lengthy letter but I hope that it provides reminders for our existing families and useful information to our new ones. I am usually available at the beginning or end of the day at the entrance to the infant playground should you need to talk to me.

Weekly newsletters will be sent out every Friday by **Parent Mail only**. If you are not currently not registered then call the school office to organise this or request a hard copy from the office. The first newsletter for the term will be sent out on Friday 11th September.

Wishing all families a restful weekend and thank you for your on-going support.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Qureshi
Head Teacher