

Risca Primary School

Autumn Newsletter No 7

Thursday 12th November 2020



Dear Mums and Dads,

As the nights are drawing in, I think that we can all feel that winter is approaching very quickly indeed. It seems strange now to be going home in the dark at the end of the day. Of course, on the bright side, that means that we all have Christmas to look forward to. This year, as you can imagine, Christmas, will by necessity be very different in school. It will come as no surprise to you that this year we are unable to hold Christmas Concerts and as we have had to alter our curriculum, in line with current risk assessments, there are some Christmas customs and routines which we may very well have to change this year. However, please don't worry, this week, we are sitting down together (socially distanced of course!) to plan a range of alternative activities for our Christmas week, which I am sure that all children will enjoy. More of that a little later in this newsletter.

School Dinners

Firstly, can I thank you so much for supporting us and sending dinner monies in, in a clearly marked envelope. This helps us to adhere to the Local Authority risk assessment for handling cash.

We are very pleased that we are now able to serve hot lunches in a box. As you know these lunches are served in classrooms and children are able to eat at their desks. This has been very successful over the last few weeks and I would like to thank all of the staff who are working extra hard to deliver lunches to classrooms in a timely manner. It really is like a military operation and staff are having to work very quickly to get everything out on time! In order for us to keep everything as safe as possible for staff and for children, it is better if children bring their own drink for lunch. If you could include a drink in all lunch bags I would be very grateful. Alternatively children will have access to their water bottle throughout lunchtime to keep themselves hydrated. Many thanks.

Starting and Finishing School

We continue to operate a staggered start and end to our school day. This is proving successful and I would thank all of you who clear the yard as soon as possible. It really is important that we keep the yard as clear as possible to ensure that we are all able to socially distance. I know that

some of the staff are concerned that at the beginning and end of the day a small number of children are running and climbing over our equipment and outdoor classrooms. Please could I request that whilst in the school yard you keep your children with you at all times. This will ensure that children are safe. We wouldn't want any children to have an accident whilst either waiting for school or at the end of the school day. Many thanks.

Self Isolation

As you know our main priority this year is to minimise the risk of school closure as much as possible. Therefore when assessing pupil and staff health we always err on the side of caution. Therefore, as a school we continue to be rigorous when assessing children's health: we are asking parents to pick up children should they be unwell. As you know, under usual circumstances, we are very eager for children to attend school regularly, but if children are showing any symptoms of Covid 19, we would ask that they be kept home from school and only returned to school after receiving a negative Covid 19 test result.

I know that the current regulations can be seen as a bit confusing, and we have had a few enquiries over the last few weeks. so, as a reminder, it is important to remember that if any member of your household is tested for Covid 19, then all members of the household must stay at home until the test results are finalised. Therefore if any of your household is undergoing testing for Covid 19, children are unable to attend school during that time.

I know how challenging this can be for families and I would like to thank all parents who have worked with us over the last term to keep our community safe and well.

Of course self isolation and the current situation also can affect staff attendance at work and we also have a strict 'err on the side of caution' protocol with staff. In certain cases, to date, in line with Welsh Government guidance, we have had staff who have also had to refrain from work pending a test result from a member of their household. Please do not be worried if your child's teacher is not in school, this could be for a number of reasons. However, please be reassured that should we believe that your child has been in contact with a positive case in school, we would contact you immediately and ask you to follow self isolation procedures. Many thanks.

Children In Need

'Children in Need' has snuck up upon us very quickly this year and this year we are keeping things very simple. Should you wish to participate, your child can wear own clothes on Friday 13th November and any contributions to this worthwhile charity can be sent into school.

Harvest

Many thanks for all of your harvest contributions. I think that we are all aware that during this uncertain economic time, many families are finding it hard to make ends meet. We have sent all donations to the Risca Foodbank to be distributed locally to families in need.

Parents Evenings

Many thanks to all of you who participated in our telephone call parents evening this week. Staff have reported that many of you were really positive about the new format and had welcomed the opportunity to chat about your child's progress over the phone. I also hope that you enjoyed seeing your child's work on See-Saw. Overall we are absolutely amazed at the progress that many children are making. They really are working very hard for us!

Christmas

So far we have some lovely activities planned for Christmas. Naturally many of our activities will be virtual to ensure that we keep children safe. We have an online panto booked for the whole school and we are currently working on a range of activities to make our last week in school really exciting for our children. For our younger children we are hoping for a little peek inside Santa's workshop!!! Shhhhhhh! We really hope that those Elves can spare the time for us. Keep your fingers crossed!

Training Day

Don't forget that we have a training day on Monday (16th November).

Flu Vaccinations

Don't forget we are having our flu vaccinations in school on Tuesday 17th November. If you haven't sent in your return slip for permission please get them in tomorrow. The school nurses require a form to be completed for every child, whether you would like them to have the vaccination or not.

Christmas Holiday

School closes for Christmas on Friday 18th December at the usual time, and then re-opens in the New Year on Tuesday 5th January.

Useful Dates

November

Monday 16th November - Training day

Tuesday 17th November - Flu vaccination day

December

Friday 18th December - School closes for Christmas

January

Monday 4th January 2021- Training day
Tuesday 5th January 2021 - School reopens for children

Many thanks, stay safe,

Mrs Arthur and Staff.