

# Newsletter

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you enjoyed half term last week and it has been wonderful to receive happy children back to school for this half term with some exciting activities planned ahead.

I would like to reassure parents that with the event of the second national lockdown starting today, our covid-safe operational procedures and risk assessments are firmly in place adhering to the latest DfE and Trust guidance. This will ensure that our school community continue to stay as safe as possible. In the event of a confirmed case of coronavirus in school that results in class or bubble closure, teachers will continue to deliver home learning to those pupils through our digital learning platform and face to face sessions using Microsoft Teams. Children and staff who present with any symptoms (a cough, temperature, loss of taste or smell) should not come to school. Children in year 7 and above should wear face masks in their taxi.

You may be aware of the government's universal Coronavirus Catch-up Premium funding for schools this academic year. The funding should be used for specific activities to support pupils to catch up for lost teaching over the school closure and lockdown period last academic year. Schools have the flexibility to spend their funding in the best way for their cohort and circumstances. To support best use of this funding, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has published evidence-based approaches to catch up and help schools use their additional funding in the most effective way.

Medeshamstede will be using the funding for both a speech and language therapist and occupational therapist for one day a week this year. These interventions will support all pupils with their language and communication needs, sensory needs and daily living skills through programmes that will be integrated into our planning, delivery and class learning activities. Supporting these needs enables our pupils to further overcome difficulties associated with autism and engage more deeply with their learning and the curriculum. To this end, we are delighted that Mrs Donna Guest, occupational therapist, will be with us at Medeshamstede on Fridays throughout this academic year. Therapists will assess and deliver interventions directly with pupils, classes, plan alongside teachers to integrate therapies into curriculum activities and provide training to staff.

Our recovery curriculum last term was successful in supporting children back to school. This term, class teachers will balance the academic curriculum with our 'hidden' curriculum approaches to support children's communication and language, metacognition (thinking and learning) and self-regulation for their individual developmental stage. Children in key stages 1- 3 will continue to learn through our Cornerstones Curriculum termly imaginative learning projects and details of class themes and activities will be shared with you and contained on our website.

Starting on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November, we will be taking part in Children in Need week "*Five to Thrive*". This year the focus is on children's health and wellbeing. We will finish the week with a non-uniform day on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November for a donation of £1. This donation can be brought in on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> and placed in the class collection pot as they come into school, children will then wash their hands, or use gel, as usual.

Our catering manager, Mrs Greenaway, is delighted to be providing children with hot lunches once again this term, much needed in the colder months ahead. Children will continue to eat lunch in classrooms to protect the integrity of class bubbles. We appreciate that navigating the Parentpay system for school lunches, put in place to avoid handling of money during this time, can be tricky. Mrs Edwards is happy to help any parents to use this system.

Staff recently took part in service training to support positive behaviour for learning through assessment and planning for pupils' individual positive behaviour support plans. These will be shared and co-produced with you at our upcoming teacher-parent meetings this term, taking place in the week beginning 23<sup>rd</sup> November over MS Teams. Appointment details will follow shortly.

Alongside these plans, teachers will share your child's pupil profile containing their individual termly learning targets. Targets have been informed through teacher's baseline assessment of what children know and can do and what their next steps need to be. Termly person-centred targets are the short term benchmarks of success informing individual progress towards longer term EHCP outcomes.

A Parentmail message was sent this week regarding the disabled parking spaces on the school site. Please do not park in these spaces as they are for use by blue disabled badge holders only.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns please do get in touch. We place high value on the importance of working in partnership with all our parents/carers and look forward to a safe and happy half term.

Warm regards,



Mrs Laura Ives  
(Principal)