



SUPPORT FOR LIFE THROUGH  
COMPASSION, PERSEVERANCE & RESPECT

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

### **SPRING HALF TERM 1 – NEWSLETTER**

I hope that you have all had a restful holiday period and that, whilst your Christmas and New Year celebrations may have been different to the ones you usually have, you managed to enjoy yourselves and look to the positives of the time that you had with your families.

I would like to say that I have had a restful break, and I did at the start. However, I have been 'head down' for a few days now trying to understand what the government's plans are and how they will affect us as we go into this term. You may have seen from the media over the last few days, that in the absence of any appropriate direction from the government, the unions associated with workers in school have sought to take measures into their own hands to ensure the safety of their members. This has resulted in staff in schools being advised to refuse to do face-to-face learning to mitigate against a coronavirus variant that is clearly more virulent and spreading rapidly. As school staff we wouldn't be in the job that we are if we didn't want to see children in the classroom learning - and that is the same for school staff across the country, despite the image that some sections of the media would like to portray. It has not been easy for any of the school staff to see our professionalism as a body being called into question. That said, at this current time, the staff here have reviewed their own risks and all are willing to come in to school. If they had not felt it was the right thing to do I would also have fully supported them. The governing body and I have made the school as safe as we can for our staff, but the one variable that we cannot control is the number of other people your children come into contact with outside of school, or your own procedures to keep your family, and those you come into contact with, safe. As a result I urge you all to think about the wider implications of any actions that you choose to do - whilst your family may be at low risk, my staff cannot avoid being close contacts with your children, and we may be at greater risk, or live with people who are more vulnerable.

So, at the moment we will be in mostly as normal. We will continue to ensure that we keep our two bubbles (Orcas/Seals and Puffins/Starfish) apart from each other throughout the school day. We will continue to offer wraparound care for those that require it, but we will not be running any after-school clubs for this half-term as staff would have to work across different bubbles to do it.

#### **Remote Learning**

If your child does have to self-isolate we will be using Google Classroom (Puffins, Orcas and Seals) or Tapestry (Starfish) to provide you with daily learning. The expectation from the government is that your child will do 4-5 hours of school work each day, unless they are unwell. We will set work daily and expect it to be turned in on Google Classroom/uploaded to Tapestry as appropriate. It is non-negotiable and should your child be unwilling to complete it I am more than happy to have that discussion with them via the phone or video-link. The work each day must be completed by 3.30 pm to be marked and for adjustments to be made to the next day's plan if necessary.

Mrs Threlfall: Head Teacher

Embleton Vincent Edwards C of E Aided Primary School, Embleton, Alnwick Northumberland NE66 3XR

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All children in Orca and Seal class are able to get on with the work without significant additional support. They know how to log on to Google Classroom as we have spent a lot of time since September using it in school. We appreciate that it is more of a challenge for those with children in Puffin and Starfish class, however the expectation remains that the work is completed daily.

To adapt the work for online learning takes a significant amount of time for my staff, on top of their work preparing for delivery in the classroom for the rest of the class. If your child is struggling to complete it then please let us know at the earliest opportunity as my staff do not have time to waste.

### **Weather**

One of the main coronavirus mitigations is that the classrooms are well ventilated. This means that the classroom windows will continue to be open at all times. Please make sure that your children have layers on so that they can adjust their body temperature accordingly. A further mitigation is for the classrooms to be fully aired each break time. As a result all children will be outside, whatever the weather, during breaks (excepting thunderstorms and hail!) Please ensure that wellies, waterproof trousers and a waterproof coat are in school every day (this is not required in Starfish class, as we have school ones for the children to use).

In the event of ice a path will be gritted round to the school entrance from the gates. Please ensure that you keep to the path. The school will not take responsibility for any injuries that occur if people do not keep to the path.

In the event of snow we will make every effort to keep the school open. That said, if we need to close, information will be on the Northumberland County Council Website and the school website. We will also endeavour to let you know via email. If this happens we will revert to remote learning.

### **Wraparound**

We continue to offer wraparound care from 7.30 am, and until 5.30 pm. Please speak to Melissa if you would like to book any sessions. We prefer bookings in advance, although can take additional children on a short notice basis if you are stuck.

### **PE – Puffins, Seals and Orcas**

Due to coronavirus, we are still unable to go swimming as part of PE. We will continue to have PE on Thursday afternoons (Puffins, Seals and Orcas). Please ensure that your child brings PE kit in with them. If the weather isn't too vile we will be doing PE outside.

### **Beach School**

We will be continuing to attend Beach School every Friday. Please ensure that children wear school PE kit to come to school. We will continue to monitor and assess the weather and conditions each week, and will adjust our sessions accordingly, whether that be by working in the dunes, going to a sheltered spot on the beach, going down slightly later, or coming back earlier. Assume that your child will ALWAYS be going and dress them accordingly. Please ensure coats are properly waterproof (not just shower proof), and that your child is wearing layers underneath their school hoodie. Please also ensure that your child is wearing warm socks - the plastic soles of many wellies do not insulate the children very well, and cold feet quickly become uncomfortable.

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Please make sure that your child has both wellies and trainers in school on Fridays, as we will return at lunchtime, due to being unable to use the golf club for lunch.

### **Communication**

Important information, newsletters, diary dates, class pages and weekly school and class blogs are on the school website at [www.embletonprimarieschool.com](http://www.embletonprimarieschool.com). Please use this as your first port of call for finding the information you need. If there is anything else you would like to see on the website please let us know. We will continue to send out information via email. Please make sure that if you change your email address or phone number, you let us know. This is particularly important should we need to contact you in an emergency.

If you would like to speak to a member of staff please either catch us at the beginning or end of day, email us ([admin@vincentedwards.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:admin@vincentedwards.northumberland.sch.uk)) or give us a call.

### **Payments to School**

Please ensure payments to school are made promptly. This is particularly important for lunch money. Lunch money is due on the Monday for that week. The school can accept cash or cheques.

### **School Applications**

If you have a nursery-aged child, please remember that you need to apply for a school place for Reception by next week. Let us know if you are having problems accessing the form online.

Kind Regards

Nicola Threlfall  
Head Teacher

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