



South Gosforth First School

'Roots to grow and wings to fly'

Dear Parents & Carers

What a busy but wonderful half term it has been to have all of our children back in school. Whilst we are by no means 'back to normal', all of our pupils have really shown us how well they respond to the routine and structure of every day school life. We feel that we have made a great start to delivering our academic recovery plan and our children are definitely all rising to the 'catch up challenge'. It really has been a pleasure to have our school family back together again.

As we are at the end of our first half term, there are a few things which I would like to mention to all of our families before we enter in to the October break...

Home Learning Offer & 'Blended Learning Policy'

After taking on board feedback from our whole school community, we have taken steps to enhance our home learning offer since the beginning of this half term. From next half term the home learning offer will be comprised of the following:

Scenario 1 – One or two pupils in a class self-isolating due to COVID-19

Day 1 – The child would access stand-alone activities which the teachers have uploaded on to our school website under the 'COVID-19' tab.

Day 2 – The child's class teacher would upload appropriate work for the pupils to complete with specific instructions on to our 'Seesaw' or 'Tapestry' online learning platform.

Day 3 or more - The child's class teacher would upload appropriate work for the pupils to complete with specific instructions on to our 'Seesaw' or 'Tapestry' online learning platform, in addition to 2 short video clips of key teaching points being covered. This will be based upon lessons which the pupils will have been having that day in school. The child can then upload their work and the teacher will give feedback when they can after they have finished teaching the rest of the class in school.

Scenario 2 – A whole class bubble has to self-isolate due to COVID-19

The class teacher will upload a series of work, tasks and activities on to 'Seesaw' or 'Tapestry' each day when the children are working from home. This will be in addition to 5 videos per day.

Video 1 – A 'good morning' video and a rundown of the day's learning.

Video 2, 3 and 4 – Videos of the class teacher delivering targeted teaching input. These can be watched as many times as appropriate.

Video 5 – A reading of the class novel and end of day message.

Teachers will also deliver feedback to as many pupils as they can throughout the day over 'Seesaw' or 'Tapestry'. Please note that this may not be all children every day. Please also note that there will be no homework set for over

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the half term break – this will resume again after the holiday. I will be posting a more detailed version of this home learning offer, in addition to our ‘Blended Learning’ policy on our school website over the half term break.

School Subscriptions

As part of our home learning offer and our catch up programme, we have been looking in to a range of different online subscriptions and ideas for how we can deliver learning to our pupils at home. After a lot of careful consideration, we will be soon setting up ‘MyMaths’, ‘Spelling & Grammar Bug’, ‘Grammarsaurus’ and ‘Clicker’ (however this one is largely for us in school). We will also be supporting our families to gain access to Newcastle City Library cards for their children, so that our pupils can access e-books online if they ever did need to learn from home. Please look out for further information around all of this very soon...

Reporting a Positive Case of COVID-19 over the Half Term Break

It is extremely important over the half term break that families keep in touch with us, particularly if any members of our school family test positive for COVID-19. Even though we have a week of holiday time, it is absolutely vital that we are made aware of any positive cases, as this may mean that certain families from specific bubbles may need to self-isolate over the holiday period (fingers crossed that this doesn’t happen ofcourse!)

If **anyone in your household** tests positive for COVID-19 over the October break, please contact Mr Adams on his work email address on: robert.adams@southgosforth.newcastle.sch.uk **as soon as possible**. Mr Adams will then contact Public Health England and any members of the school community which this may impact upon. Thanking you all in advance.

COVID-19 Recovery Plan

Over the last few weeks, senior leaders have been putting the finishing touches to our whole school COVID-19 recovery plan. This details how we will address our pupils’ emotional and wellbeing needs, their academic recovery and how we will seek to enhance the learning experiences for all of our children over the coming months. We have used a lot of research from Barry Carpenter (Oxford University) who advocates looking at ‘5 levers to recovery’, as well as talking to our children and families and incorporating what we feel is right for our children after we have spent time with them back at school over the last few weeks. This will be uploaded on to our website over half term for all of our families to have a look at.

New Website

If you haven’t done so already, please do take a look at our brand new school website which has been under development for the last few months. It still isn’t completely finished, but we hope that you will agree that it is much simpler for our families to navigate and find the information which they need on there now. It also has a lot of information on there about our brand new school curriculum which we are following - Do let us know what you think!

Newsletters

I am very aware that over the last few months, I haven’t been sharing newsletters in the same format as I usually would with our families. This was a conscious decision as I have had a lot of additional things to share with our community linked to COVID-19 amongst many other things. However, After the half term break, I am hoping to get back to sharing 2 newsletters per half term as I usually would, complete with information about what the children have been getting up to in school, along with other key messages. I recognise how important that it is to start celebrating our wonderful children and their achievements again and getting back to some semblance of normality (even if the rest of the world is still a bit crazy!)

Bridge Closure & Parking

I am aware that the closure of Stoneyhurst Bridge is still a contentious issue. Many of our families are in favour of the closure as they believe that it makes our school street and the surrounding areas safer for our children, whilst many of our families are opposed to the closure as they believe that it is causing a lot of problems for access etc. I would like to let our whole school community know that I have been in regular contact with Councillor Arlene Ainsley about the bridge closure, as well as other road and traffic officers at the local council. I am obviously very aware that our whole school community must have their views heard as part of the consultation and I am in talks with the council about how we do this in a fair (and socially distanced) way. I will be in touch with more information around this over the next half term

In addition to this, I am aware that there have been some issues around parking down at the Hillcrest Gardens gate at the end of our school field and some of the local residents have made some complaints about lack of access to their properties. It only came to my attention fairly recently that this is due to the fact that the council had advocated this as another place to park during drop off and collection times. My advice would be that if our families do need to drive to school to drop off or collect their children, please be considerate of the local residents and enabling them to have access in and out of their properties. Thank you all in advance.

'No Outsiders' Programme

This week, we have been lucky enough to have Mr Andrew Moffat come in to school to lead training on the 'No Outsiders' programme which we are looking to incorporate as an approach in to our PSHE and relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum. This approach centres around our diverse world and the idea that 'we are all different, but we are all welcome'. We will be leading a parent and carer consultation around our new PSHE curriculum after the half term break – this is most likely to be over the 'Zoom' virtual platform for parents in each year group. Please watch out for further details very soon.

Attendance & Punctuality Officer

Our new attendance and punctuality officer, Mrs Claire Gardner has started working with us this half term. We are really pleased to have Claire in school as a key person to help some of our families with attendance and punctuality, as this is obviously extremely important to ensure that our children gain access to the fullest education that they can during their time here. Claire's day to be in school is a Monday and her role is definitely a supportive one. If any families in our school community feel that they would benefit from some support from Claire, please let Mrs Dixon know via emailing admin@southgosforth.newcastle.sch.uk

Finally, I would like to wish each and every one of our families a fantastic, but most of all safe, half term break. You have all earned it!

Warmest wishes

Mr Adams

Head Teacher