



Head Teacher's January 2022 Newsletter

Welcome Back!

Happy New Year to you all! I hope you found my latest Doodle update useful last week ahead of your return to school? We have every endeavour to keep the school fully open and as free from Covid as possible, but we do need the support and cooperation of all parents/carers to make this happen.

The single-most effective means of stopping Covid from spreading in school is to stop it from entering site in the first place! Along with continued hand hygiene, increased ventilation and encouraged social distancing, school staff are completing routine Lateral Flow Tests (LFTs) three times a week and we are continuing to do all we can to reduce the mixing of different year groups through the school day.

There are a number of additional requests that I would like all site users to follow:

1. Please wear a face mask/shield when on the school site. I know you are outside, but it is a helpful layer and this is important to reduce the spread of airborne particles.
2. Please do not congregate with other adults in areas around school after dropping off your children.
3. If you are waiting in a queue for a gate to be opened, waiting to cross the road or enter/exit a gate please remember to stand at a 2m distance from the next person if they are not in your family group.
4. You can always say a quick greeting or farewell to the teachers if they are outside bringing in or taking out classes of children but please don't stop them for a longer chat - they need to reduce the amount of contact situations with people other than children and staff. Please use See-Saw or phone the office if you need to share any information or notify us of anything.
5. If your child is displaying ANY symptoms of Covid, please do not send them to school.

Please understand that we are all trying our best under continued pressure to support our learners in every way to make the best possible progress with minimal disruption.

Morning Start Times

Please be reminded that the school session times begin (registration) at slightly different times in the mornings between the two phases of school. It is vital that all children arrive in time to enter classes with their peers in time for this essential part of the school day.

Registration begins at 9:00am in Early Years and Foundation Phase (Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2).

Registration begins at 8:50am in Key Stage 2 (Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6)

In Key Stage 2 especially, we are experiencing an especially large number of late arrivals. I can understand why there may be some confusion, having had to introduce a variety of different staggered times over the last two years of Covid. However, I hope to clarify the situation in order to expect all children to arrive in time to catch the 8:50am train.

For security reasons, we must lock the site entry gates and external doors on the new extension soon after 8:50am when all lines of children have entered. This also allows the Breakfast Club staff to get themselves into the building to begin supporting the children in class or sign off after their morning shift. At present, the staff have been unable to lock to gates until just after 9:00am. Please accept that staff members will not let any additional parents or children through the new extension side entry gates after 8:50am - otherwise, they have to wait longer to be able to lock up. If you do miss the chance to enter through these gates, please come to the temporary Main Entrance.

From Monday 17th January, any children arriving in class after the start of registration will be recorded as late.

School Dinners

All problems with the Parent Pay online school dinner ordering system have now been resolved. It is vital that all children order their meals at home for the week ahead (for the half term ahead if you can!). We are currently working with a modified menu for a temporary time due to the building work. However, the school cooks have stressed the importance of knowing how much food to prepare each day to make sure everybody gets fed. So, at the very least please pre-order your child's dinner at home before 8am each day.

Pro-Skills After School Club

As an added safety measure, we have greatly reduced the amount of external visitors that we allow into school. As such, the coaching team from Pro-Skills will not be taking their after school sessions this month until we have assessed the situation. I am hopeful that Pro-Skills will be able to resume in February. Sorry for any disappointment.

Covid Update – Isolation, Lateral Flow Tests, etc.

In Wales, the current period of isolation when diagnosed with Covid-19 is 7 days minimum. A positive person can stop isolating if they provide two consecutive LFTs on Day 6 and Day 7. If the LFT is still positive on Day 6 or 7, the person will have to isolate up to 10 days if they have been unable to provide 2 consecutive LFTs.

If you or your child have any symptoms or have been instructed to isolate by a doctor or Track & Trace (TTP), you must isolate and arrange a PCR test. Do not stop isolating until you have a confirmed negative PCR result. If you have a positive PCR result, follow the guidance above but you must attain an "end of isolation" date from TTP or NHS.

Please take heed of all letters that I may have to send out following the identification of any positive cases in school. There are two letters:

1. "INFORM" Letter = Sent out to the whole year group following one or two cases in the year group. This instructs you to be extra alert to your child showing any symptoms or signs of illness.
2. "WARN AND INFORM" Letter = Sent out to the whole year group if two or more cases are identified in the same class/year group within a 7 day period. This instructs all children to complete a series of daily LFTs each morning before coming to school for a period of 7 days.

Vehicle Drop-offs

As the new school site takes shape, we are introducing our drop-off bays for a quick and easy way of dropping your child off at school. Although they are not marked out clearly yet, the area can be found by entering the site (CAREFULLY and SLOWLY) and driving towards the round-about. Go around the round-about and the bays are located on your left hand side near the builder's compound. Bear in mind that the drop-off bays are NOT going to be parking spaces for parents. They are designed to provide a quick, safe means of dropping your child at school and then driving off again. Your child should be sensible and independent enough to walk down the pavement island and use zebra crossing points to get themselves to the right place. Bear in mind, Carol the Lollipop Lady has to park in the drop-off area and there may also be vehicles belonging to the builders and Doctors on the odd occasion.

Please do not stop your car to drop your child off in any other area. I've noticed some parents dropping off before the round-about and inside the little car park on the left. Please don't. One driver even proceeded to attempt a 3-point turn in the middle of the car park road! Again, please don't do this.

Music Tuition

As an added safety measure, we have decided not to invite the peripatetic music teachers into school to work face-to-face with the children. At Borrás, although I am proud to support our many children that are learning a wide range of musical instruments, I am being extra cautious in the first couple of weeks so that I can assess the initial impact of Covid in schools. I have every intention of re-introducing the face-to-face music tuition as soon as possible. If my Covid case-load is causing any significant concern, we will arrange for music tuition to move on-line via Teams or Zoom. Rest assured; one way or another, your child will still receive excellent, specialist musical tuition this half term and beyond. Thank you for your patience.

Medicine in School – nipping it in the bud

Recently, we have had a few children appearing at school with medicine and an expectation that a member of staff will administer it. For a number of reasons, this is definitely not the case. We have strict policy relating to medicine in school in order to protect staff and pupils at the school. If your child has a general illness and requires non-prescribed medicine through the day such as Calpol, they should not be in school as they are ill. We are not allowed to administer any non-prescribed medication just in case a child has a reaction or the medicine causes harm.

If your child has been given a course of prescribed medicine, a parent must contact the school (via the office or class teacher) for an initial discussion to take place about the nature of the medicine and how and why it needs to be given in school. Ideally, a parent or other familiar adult should arrange to come to school to administer the medicine. A 3-dose course of antibiotics should be given at home before school, after school and at bedtime. A 4-dose course may require a lunch time dose. If this is not possible, we will try to arrange for a member of staff to administer the medicine. Staff members are not obliged or duty-bound to administer medicine but we will try our best to support necessary cases.

Returning After Illness

In line with NHS guidance, if your child has been sick or has had diarrhoea, they MUST NOT come to school for a full 48 hours after their last episode. Stomach bugs are easily spread to other children and staff should a child return to school too early.



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PE Lesson Dates

Via the use of See-Saw, please contact your child's class teacher if you do not know what day your child has PE. Remember, your child is allowed to come to school in their PE kit if they have a PE lesson. Please do not send your child to school in football kits or other random sports attire such as bright tracksuits. School PE kits, a school sweater and black/ grey tracksuit bottoms are the way to go.

Mobile Phones and Smart Watches

In Year 5 and 6, it is currently permitted for children to bring a mobile phone into school if they walk to and from school on their own. We have a specific letter that outlines the strict rules in place for this to happen appropriately as well as a parental consent form and waiver. Children at the right age to be considered for mobile phones are not allowed to bring their mobile to school if a parent/carer has NOT signed the agreement. If your child does NOT walk to and from school on their own, they do not need to bring a mobile phone to school in the first place. Any breaches of the rules will result in a mobile phone ban for the child concerned.

Smart Watches are increasing in popularity across the school for children of all ages. Not only can they be very expensive, they have the potential to present a safeguarding problem. If a Smart Watch has the ability to make/receive calls, send/receive text messages or can take photos/videos then they are definitely not allowed to be worn in school.

If a Smart Watch can tell the time, count steps, calories or has a stopwatch then this kind of watch is fine.

Term Dates for the Academic Year 2021 - 2022

Please keep these dates in a safe place and add them to your calendar or diary.

Spring Term 2022

- Pupils Returned - Monday 10th January 2022 (Happy New Year!)
- Last day for pupils $\frac{1}{2}$ Term - Friday 18th February
- Pupils Return - Monday 28th February
- Last day for pupils - Friday 8th April

Summer Term 2022

- Pupils Return - Tuesday 26th April
- Last day for pupils $\frac{1}{2}$ Term - Thursday 26th May
- Pupils Return - Tuesday 7th June
- Last day for pupils - Tuesday 19th July (School's out for summer!)

INSET Days (Staff Training)

Thursday 6th January 2022 (This got changed from an INSET Day to a Planning and Preparation Day)

Friday 7th January 2022 (This got changed from an INSET Day to a Planning and Preparation Day)

Monday 25th April 2022

Monday 6th June 2022

Tuesday 7th June 2022 (This is a replacement for Thursday 6th Jan and will be used as a moving-in day)

Wednesday 20th July (This is a replacement for Friday 7th Jan)

Bank Holidays

Monday 2nd May (May Day)

Friday 27th May (Queen's Platinum)

School Term Dates for the Autumn Term (next academic year 2022-2023)

INSET DAY - Thursday 1st September

INSET DAY - Friday 2nd September

First Day for pupils - Monday 5th September 2022

Last day for pupil $\frac{1}{2}$ Term - Thursday 27th October

Pupils Return - Monday 7th November

Last day for pupils - Friday 23rd December

The dates for the rest of the 2022/23 academic year will follow.

Díolch am eich cefnogaeth - Thank you for your support ~ Mr Nicholson