



23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

### **COVID UPDATE TO PARENTS**

As we move ever closer to a well-deserved and much needed Half Term for all at Delapre Primary School, I wanted to reflect on where we are and what next.

The Summer holiday was an incredibly busy time at school making sure everything was ready for September. This was made somewhat more complicated by frequent changes in directives from the government. However, even with the bombardment of differing information and huge challenges, staff really pulled together to ensure that we opened successfully.

Whilst the first few days were full of trepidation, it was such a wonderful feeling on that first day in September when our children returned. This was then made even better with the excited faces of all the new starters. Although many children had been away for such a long time, it was incredible to see so many of them returning to school with huge smiles, great enthusiasm and wonderful tales to tell of what they had been up to.

From a personal point of view, the previous months had been challenging and deeply concerning for so many reasons, but I was proud that we had stayed open throughout (even though it had been suggested that schools had closed), but welcoming children and parents each morning quickly made me move on from the difficult times we had previously had. The mornings have been a really great opportunity for us to welcome all of you on a daily basis. I have learnt so much and must thank all those parents who have tolerated my company on most mornings come rain or shine and then had to put up with me upon collecting the children later the same day (I can only apologise). In reality, the changes we have made have enabled us to see so many amazing children with exceptional manners and huge infectious smiles. What a difference they have made to each one of us at school. I have also really enjoyed many of the conversations with parents and again, learned so much about so many people that in normal times, I would rarely have such opportunities.

I must also thank so many of you for your continued support given during very different processes that now take place due to Covid-19. You have worked with us as we ensure that as a school we follow government guidance and adjust our procedures accordingly.

In school, the children have really settled in well and the teachers have had the time to monitor and assess every child's learning. We are aware that some children may have lost learning due to the lockdown period and it is important that we enable pupils to learn and consolidate key learning skills in order to make good progress in reading, writing and maths. We are also ensuring that the wellbeing of the children remains a top priority and are giving them opportunities to discuss their feelings.



I am sure that you have all been aware of the news this week and the Government's new three-tier approach to tackling Covid-19. This does not change things for us at school at the moment, but I feel it is important to remind you all of our responsibilities as members of our community.

We must not become complacent with the measures that we have put in place in school and it is important that everyone continues to follow these rules:

- Please be on time for your designated drop off and pick up times
- Please also maintain suitable distance from other parents where possible
- Only one parent should bring a child to school
- If you have young children, please keep them with you at all times
- Please do not enter the school office unless through appointment
- Where possible, we ask that parents and children walk to school

We have not been informed of any changes to the wearing of face coverings at this time but this may become subject to change depending on future events. If we are made aware of changes, we will inform you straight away and will then ask for your support in this matter.

On a different note, I need to clarify what drinks may be brought to school. In our previous communication, we asked for every child to bring in a named water bottle. It has come to our attention that some of these bottles contain squash. Please can you ensure that the bottles only contain water as only water will be allowed during the learning and break times.

I am delighted that whilst we have had a small number of children demonstrating symptoms of Covid-19, not a single child has tested positive and we have not had to close a single bubble at this stage. We are continuing to operate small bubble sizes to ensure that in the case of a positive test result, we are able to send as few classes home as possible.

One factor that you may not be aware of with the present situation is the impact upon schools with regard to staffing. Whilst trying to ensure everyone is as safe as possible, any member of our school staff demonstrating any of the symptoms are immediately asked to leave the school in order for them to be tested until a negative test result is returned.

This has meant that on several occasions we have been fully stretched and close to not being able to place teachers in classes. In several schools this week we are witnessing closures due to lack of staff available to teach. This is not something that we want to do, however, we may at some point be left with no option.

As a school we must be prepared for every eventuality and for this reason, staff at Delapre have worked hard to ensure that we have a new 'Remote Learning' system that will be used as soon as any child/class is absent from school in relation to Covid-19. Your child may have already mentioned the online learning that we have been familiarising them with. There will be a guide to the different learning platforms that can be located under the existing Home-Working Tab on our school website <http://www.delapreprimaryschool.net/home-working/> . Please take time to read our Remote Learning strategy document which you should have received alongside this communication.

If you are receiving this information via ParentPay, thank you for activating your account. **If you have received this as a hard copy, or by individual email to your personal address, please urgently activate your ParentPay account. In the event of notification of a school closure, or any other important information, ParentPay will be our way of communicating.**

**If you have a positive result for a Covid test in your household over the Half Term Break, please email details of the positive result to:-**

[covid19@delapre.northants.sch.uk](mailto:covid19@delapre.northants.sch.uk)

I want to thank everyone and express just how much your efforts are appreciated. What will happen in the next few months is uncertain, but it is as important as ever that we do everything we can to support each other and members of our community. Delapre children are incredibly special and I remain immensely proud of them. Their resilience and hard work in class is fantastic. I am constantly reminded by parents how much their children are enjoying being back in school and I can report that this is evident from seeing them in their classes. They are a credit to their families.

Wishing you all a restful half-term break. We look forward to seeing the children return to school on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020.

Yours faithfully



**H Portrey  
Headteacher**