

Penshurst

CE Primary School

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11th February 2022

Dear Parents,

This week, rather than a newsletter I am writing in a little more detail as I have a number of items to cover and so need further space than is available in my weekly newsletter. My usual newsletter will resume on Friday 25th February 2022.

Covid19

This has been another challenging term – so far in the pandemic we had managed to keep Covid19 out of the school but unfortunately in Term 3 it got the better of us. Since January 26 children out of 88 have had Covid, 11 had to isolate for Covid related issues; in total 24 families were impacted by Covid19. On top of this there were a number of other bugs circulating. I hope that any family affected are now well and for those of us who have managed to dodge it – let's hope that continues! Many thanks to you all for your support and understanding. We have had no positive cases this week and I am hoping that the half term break will provide a further break in transmission. I would like to pay tribute to my staff who have been amazing in their approach – we have managed to keep the school going with very little disruption to the children. They truly deserve their half term break.

School Budgets

Covid19 does have a wider impact on schools – the staffing issues are very evident and are even trickier in a small school with limited human resources. There is also a significant impact on our budget – when teachers are away from school we had additional supply teacher costs. There is also the impact on pupil's learning – I am very proud of the school's commitment to ensuring that we offer all pupils the support they need so that they continue to make progress. Throughout the pandemic we have provided pupils with additional support as needed – this also has financial implications and whilst the government reports that it is providing additional funding – this does not always (in real life) filter through to make a significant difference to a school's budget. The work that the PTA do in raising funds for the school are more important now than ever as they are able to support projects, trips and the wider experiences we give to our pupils. Thank you for supporting them and I would ask, if you are able, to explore how you might support them in the fundraising.

Reports & Open Afternoons

We normally offer parents the opportunity to come into school during Term 3 to look at their child's work; unfortunately due to limiting people in school this was not possible. I am now exploring a time when this can happen early in Term 4. We will send out the date once it has been discussed with staff. This year we are also trialling providing pupil reports before we break for the Easter holiday. This will be for pupils in Years 1-6; the idea is to provide parents with information about their child's attainment and progress together with next steps that their child will be working on for the rest of the academic year. In the past the report was written in the final term of the school year, traditionally this is a very busy term and report writing places additional pressures on teachers. The intention is two-fold: to reduce teacher workload at a busy time of year and to give parents more timely information about their child's learning. We will then offer a meeting to discuss the content of the report. This is a trial and I will be seeking feedback from parents during Term 5. Children in our Reception Class will receive their report in Term 6 as this summarises their first year at school.

Lost Property

There are a great number of jumpers and cardigans in our lost property box; please take time to have a look through and see if any belong to your child. Please can I ask that you clearly label jumpers, cardigans and hoodies so that they can be returned to their owners.

Diary Dates

Key dates are regularly added to our website (see the school calendar); you will also find information about term dates for the rest of the year there. We have an INSET day on Friday 1st April – which is the last day of Term 4.

When I walk around school I am always very impressed with the work our children produce. Looking through children's books and talking to them about their work gives me a real feel for both teacher and pupil expectations. This week as a staff we looked at writing across the school – pupils really are completing some fantastic work – from creating their own

Faith in Our Future

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books in Reception to writing about the Ancient Greeks in Years 5 and 6. Well done to all the children as they work really hard to do their best.

Stars of the Week

Maple Class: Elliot for working hard with his writing – he has been writing stories independently.

Elm Class: Year 1: Leo who has been making great progress with his reading. Year 2 to Amelia who has also been making excellent progress not just in reading but across the curriculum.

Beech Class: Year 3: Raphael for consistently working hard in every subject. Year 4: Martha for working hard especially with her maths.

Oak Class: Year 5 – for working hard in maths and ensuring her presentation is spot on – the award was given to Laura.

Year 6: Ellery for consistently producing work of the highest standards.



Tunbridge Wells Half Marathon

Good luck to any of you running the Tunbridge Wells Half Marathon; thanks too if you have volunteered to marshal part of the route in Penshurst.

I hope that you all have an enjoyable half term break and that the weather is kind to us.

I look forward to welcoming you all back on Monday 21st February.

With best wishes,

Sue Elliott,
Headteacher.