



Rowlands Gill Primary School

15.1.2021 Newsletter

Thank You

I want to start by saying a huge thank you to everyone. No-one expected the start of spring term to turn out how it did or for the plan to start the new term, to change with no notice (unless you count 13 hours between 8pm—9am as notice)! Thank you for working closely with us to implement the Government's national restrictions which ensure as many children as possible stay at home to reduce the risk of Covid transmission and keep our community safer. I know that you have all had a difficult time managing to balance your many roles alongside supporting your children at home and adjusting to another lockdown. Thanks also to our critical workers (who have had no other option than to request a place at school), as they too have helped us by ensuring their child only attends when they absolutely need to and that all covid rules on-site are fully adhered to.



Our children have adjusted well to remote learning and are working hard to engage with their lessons; our staff have worked tirelessly to get the remote learning right and to support you, our families, with the technology and learning.

Once again, we have shown what an amazing school community we have here at RGPS - **thank you all!**

Free School Meals

Following all the publicity in the media this week, we wanted to share with you all how the School is currently supporting our families who are entitled to benefit related Free School Meals (FSM) during this current lockdown period.



Pupils attending school will receive their dinner on site as normal. Pupils who are at home have already received a 1-week food parcel kindly delivered by one of our Governors.

As you are aware the Government has now stated that Primary schools are able to offer vouchers instead of food deliveries. However our kitchen team are very well organised and have already ordered the food for food parcels (before the Government announcement), so on Monday we will be issuing a 2-week food parcel as previously agreed. This prevents any food being wasted and also allows us time to look into the provision of these new FSM vouchers for subsequent weeks.

If your circumstances have changed at all and you think you may now be entitled to benefit related FSM please get in touch with the School office who can help with any application queries or use this link to apply. <https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/10245/Apply-for-free-school-meals>

Please note that Benefit related FSM are different to the Universal FSM provided to all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

Prioritising Well-Being

From Monday, Miss Latto will be uploading 4 short PE lessons per week in the ongoing activities on the class pages because we want the children to spend time away from the computers and help to keep their body and mind healthy and active. This should be a fun part of their learning and a good way to break up their day.



Positive Covid Test

Please continue let us know if your child test positive for Covid, or if your household is self-isolating even if they are remote learning.

Each day I have to complete a return to the DfE about our school community and one of those questions includes how many children are self-isolating or have tested positive.



Drop-In Live Sessions

Once a week each class will have a slot where their teacher will be available for a live drop-in. This is so that the children/parents can ask any specific questions about the learning or lessons.

We ask that as soon as your question has been answered that you leave the meet to enable others to ask their question.

This is not an additional live lesson, it is simply another way to access support from the class teacher if you need it. The day and time for this session will be shared by the class teachers next week.

Remember that when the teachers phone the children each week this is another opportunity to ask any questions you may have OR you can contact them via the class email.

Live Lesson Buddies

For this week, while we got used to live lessons, there was another member of staff in every live lesson to take over if technology failed or to offer support. This has meant additional workload for the staff which is impossible to maintain. Luckily, the majority of lessons have been fine and the class teacher didn't need the support of a colleague.

From Monday, the majority of live lessons will run without an additional member of staff. If your child is in a live lesson and a technological failure happens e.g. the teacher freezes / sound goes off etc please give it a couple of minutes to see if it rectifies and if not, please ask your child to leave the Meet then keep an eye on Stream for an update from the teacher (or me).



KS2 Learning Time



You may remember from my update earlier in the week that the Government are now stipulating that KS2 children should have an average of 4 hours of learning per day.

We have reviewed the work provided for KS2 children this week, and with the additional PE lessons being offered for next week, we feel that what we are offering does provide an average of 4 hours per day and do not intend to increase this. Informal feedback from parents has also been that we are providing enough work and they do not wish to receive any more.

Next week, we will be adding some website links to our remote learning page. These links will be for other online activities and learning which your child could access if you did require more work, however the use of them is optional.

Resources

We are aiming to have lesson resources (other than those linked to live lessons) available from 7.30am. It is not guaranteed that this will always happen but we will endeavor to do this as much as we can.

This is to help working parents who want to talk their children through their learning before they start their own work.



Parental Feedback

The feedback we have received over the last two weeks has been brilliant. Your support of the difficult position that the school has been put in and the mammoth task that we faced has been well-received during such a difficult time.

This week there has been lots of positive feedback about the remote learning and the fabulous job which the teachers are doing. This has really spurred them on to keep going!

Next week I plan to send out a link to an online form to more formally capture parental views about our remote learning. Our system is constantly under review and we will act upon feedback where we can.

Nursery

After receiving confirmation from the Government last Thursday, that school nurseries were expected to be open we are pleased to say our Nursery reopened fully on Monday.

We already had 3 children attending as critical worker children and another 4 children have now returned to Nursery.

