



# Rowlands Gill Primary School

## 1.2.2021 Newsletter

### 100% Uptake of Lateral Flow Testing by Staff

We are very pleased that all members of staff, including the kitchen, cleaning and facilities teams have agreed to undertake regular Lateral Flow testing so we can continue to keep our school community safe.

I'm sure that you will agree that this is, once again, a fabulous commitment from our staff and a testament to how much everyone cares about our school.

### Staffing Update

Mr Potter, 3L class teacher, joined us at the start of this term and has been thrown right in at the deep end with remote learning! I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome him to our team.

Mrs Lynch is taking early retirement at Easter, working part-time until then and so is working with Mr Potter this term as a handover for class 3L. She is also supporting critical worker children on-site. Whilst we will all be sad to say goodbye to Mrs Lynch, we are really pleased that she will have some time to relax and take up new hobbies, after working so hard for the last 29 years at our school!

Miss Latto has completed her Sports Apprenticeship, passing with flying colours and is now beginning a new apprenticeship with us to become a Teaching Assistant. We are delighted that she has committed to stay with us for another 18 months!

### Funky Monkeys Temporary Closure



Unfortunately, due to the small numbers of children needing breakfast club and after-school club at the moment and the high staffing costs to run it, Nichola has had no choice but to temporarily close Funky Monkeys.

I know this has been a very difficult decision for Nichola but it is the only way to ensure that she has a business at the end of this closure, when we return to normal and more people need her service.

I'd like to thank Nichola for continuing to support the school and our families throughout this pandemic and look forward to the re-opening of Funky Monkeys when the time is right.

### Remote Learning Questionnaire Feedback Request

We have just completed our third week of full remote learning and would welcome feedback from parents and children about our provision so that we can continue to adjust or alter things to ensure that our children are receiving the best remote education which we can reasonably provide.

Please complete our questionnaire to share your thoughts. You can access the questionnaire by [clicking here](#) or it can be found on the school website, on the remote learning page.

### Free School Meals—Update

For those eligible for Benefit Related Free School Meals we are planning to implement the Government voucher scheme starting from Monday, 1st Feb. We have contacted all those who are registered, by email, with a request to confirm their email address. If you have not been contacted and believe you should be, please phone the office on: 01207 549 359.

Where pupils are attending school full-time, FSM provision will be provided with dinners on site. Where pupils are attending on a part-time basis then vouchers will be issued on a pro-rata basis. We will contact those parents on individual basis where this applies.

The Government are not providing vouchers for the February half-term however, Gateshead Local Authority have committed their own funds to supporting schools to continue to provide the vouchers during the half term.



## Weekly Friday Assembly 2.20pm



Every Friday we will be holding our Praise Assembly on Google Meet for all children in Years 1–6. Class teachers will add the link to Google Classroom, or Seesaw, on a Friday afternoon just before the assembly start time.

When joining the assembly leave your microphone and camera on until you give us a wave to say hello. Then please turn them both off to help the system to cope with the large number of people in the meet.

If you have been selected to receive a certificate, please turn on your camera and microphone and say hello so we can all see you, while your class teacher describes why you have been chosen.

## Remote Learning

I am delighted to report that we have **93% of our children regularly engaging** with our remote learning and completing their work online.

We continue to work with the families of the 7% of children who are not fully accessing their learning at home, to encourage participation.

## Phone Calls



Our remote education plan (which was created before this current lockdown) states that we will contact each pupil by phone every week and to date, the class teachers and teaching assistants have done this. However this is adding quite considerable pressure to an already very heavy workload for staff.

We feel that there are lots of opportunities built into our remote learning week to communicate with the children. Class teachers are seeing and talking to the majority of children 4 times per week in live sessions; children are able to message teachers using the stream; there is now a drop-in session every week and parents are contacting teachers directly via the class email.

For this reason, we are altering our plan for phone calls to the children so that we will make fortnightly contact via telephone, rather than weekly, unless we are concerned about a child or have another reason to make contact. Please remember that if you would like to speak to your child's class teacher, this can easily be arranged by emailing a request to them using class email addresses.

## Half-Term Holidays

Monday 15th - Friday 19th February 2021

The Government have confirmed that all schools will be **fully closed** for the February half-term holidays.

The staff are looking forward to a very well earned break as I'm sure are all our pupils and parents. There will be no remote learning set for the week.



## Commando Joe's

Commando Joe's is a government-supported programme supporting thousands of schools nationwide. Their programme is designed to support staff and pupils in educational settings, as well as parents at home.

During this lockdown period, they're offering parents the opportunity to create a free account for three months. CJ's at home is designed to help your children develop key skills that will help to support positive behaviours and increase their confidence through play with families. The tasks, also known as 'secret missions' develop a range of skills: Resilience, Empathy, Self-awareness, Positivity, Excellence, Communication and Teamwork, along with mental and physical wellbeing that will benefit the whole family.

Miss Latto will be including some of their ideas in your ongoing work from next week as well.

To find out more about this free opportunity and create a free account, click on the link below:

<https://commandojoes.co.uk/product/cjsfreehomelearning/>



E-mail: [rgps@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:rgps@gateshead.gov.uk)

Phone: 01207 549 359