



Newsletter

18th September 2020



Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you well. I would like to update you on the following:

Coronavirus update

Firstly, I would like to direct you to the following NHS link, which provides you with details of the steps you should take if your child has symptoms of Covid-19, or if in fact, you are uncertain of what you should do, or are unsure of any symptoms. This sits along the procedures that we are following in school, which were explained to you last week in our flow chart diagram.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children/>

We fully understand that there may be some anxieties amongst families around the recent increase in Coronavirus cases across the country. As a school, we are diligently following our risk assessment to minimise any risk to members of our community. I think that at times like this that it is important to also remind ourselves that scientific evidence overwhelmingly seems to suggest that transmission in schools, particularly with young children, remains a low risk. Additionally, cases in London remain relatively low in comparison other parts of the country, and hospital admissions remain very low. Our understanding is that there are currently no Covid patients in the Royal London.

Attendance and home learning requirements

The Department for Education has recently provided us with an update on attendance and home learning requirements, which I would like to take the opportunity to explain to you.

The DFE have created a new attendance code, to reflect the fact that some children will be required to be off school to self-isolate, either whilst they are awaiting a test result if they, or someone from their household, has developed symptoms, or if they have to quarantine after travel abroad. This attendance code is 'X'.

Schools now have to provide home learning to any child with this attendance code. A child will only receive this code for the following reasons:

- If they have to quarantine when returning home from abroad, up to a total of 14 days. After 14 days, they are able to return to school, and will no longer receive this code even if they remain absent;
- If a child is required to self-isolate because they, or a member of their household, has developed symptoms whilst awaiting a test result. Once they receive a test result, they no longer are a Code X. A child with a negative result would then be able to return to school. In the case of a positive result, a child's code would also no longer be an X code, but rather an I (illness) code, for which we do not have to provide home learning;
- If a child is required to self-isolate because they, or a member of their household, has developed symptoms, but they are unable to, or decline to, get a test. This would be for up to 14 days, as stated by Public Health guidance. In this case, they would also be Code X, until the isolation period is complete.

Schools, however, are not required to provide home learning for a child absent for any other reason. Therefore, for example, if a child is off with an illness that is not related to any Covid symptoms or restrictions, then home learning is not provided.

We will be providing children with a home learning pack in both reading and maths. These are in the form of booklets, which seek to reignite learning from last year, as well as consolidating essential skills from this term. We are favouring this approach because we feel that it is important that teachers have a clear understanding of what children have covered when they have been at home, whilst also being very clear on any in-class learning that they will have missed, which they will then seek to address once the child has returned to school.

The maths booklet has three levels of challenge for each skill, and the reading booklet provides varying levels of challenge as children progress through it. A 'code X' child would receive one pack for the duration of their time off, sent to parents at the end of the first day of their absence, via email. You will also be able to see year group chronologies on our website if you wish to support your child further with their learning, and homework (if you have requested it) will continue to be sent via Teams.

Please do speak to class teachers, or myself, if you have any further queries on this.

Photographer

On Tuesday 22nd September, we are really pleased to be having a photographer in school to take photos of the school 'in action' over the course of the day. These will be displayed in the school, and some may also be published on our school website. We have a list of all parents who have consented to having their child photographed in school, and we will honour these consents. If you have previously given your consent for your child to be photographed, but would not like them to be photographed on this occasion, please contact the school office by Monday at the latest.



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Parent consultations

As I explained to you in last week's newsletter, we will be operating our parent consultations differently this term, to reflect the current situation and restrictions we are facing.

This term all parent consultations will take place 'virtually', where possible through video calls on Microsoft Teams. All children have a Microsoft Teams account set up with their class; many of them (and their parents!) will be have grown used to using this during the lockdown period. We will ask that parents book a time slot, and that they be available at that time for the teacher to video call them for their 10 minute appointment. If accessing Teams will prove a challenge, then a telephone call can be arranged as an alternative.

Another difference is that teachers will be available for one full day, between 09:30 and 5pm on a specific date. We will be drawing up a timetable early next week for the dates for each class teacher. We aim to start on Monday 28th September, with all classes completed by Friday 16th October at the very latest. Bookings will be made via the school office. I will write to you next week with the details of the dates for each class teacher, and how to book your appointment. I would kindly request that you do not ring the school office to book an appointment until you have received the dates for your child's class, as they will be unable to book anything in until this is confirmed.

Please note that these parent consultations are for years 1 to 6 parents only. Nusery and Reception parents will have the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher later in the term, once baseline assessments have been completed.

Barnardo's See, Hear, Respond

Below is a link to the Barnardo's See, Hear, Respond partnership. See, Hear, Respond is a partnership to help children, young people and families cope with the Covid-19 crisis. It is a new service funded by the Department for Education. With your help, the See, Hear, Respond Partnership will quickly identify and support children, young people and families who are struggling to cope with the impacts of coronavirus.

https://www.barnardos.org.uk/see-hear-respond?utm_source=14%20August%202020%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19

Virtual Children's Choir

Finally, you will find attached to this newsletter a leaflet for Tower Hamlets Music Service Virtual Children's Choir, which is taking place virtually. This could be great alternative to a wonderful activity, while restrictions on group singing are still in place.

Wishing you an enjoyable and restful weekend.

With best wishes,

Cristina King

Head of School