



Headlines

Autumn Term Week 12

www.melthamceschool.co.uk

Date: Friday 4th December

Facebook: Meltham C.E Primary School

office.meltham@kirkleeseducation.uk

Twitter: @melthamceschool

Good morning everyone, what a wonderfully manic week it's been in school, but I have lots to report this morning, so I'll cross my fingers that your children will tell you all about what they've been up to and I think I'll get straight to it...

What has been the impact of school closures in March 2020?

Thank you for your response to the COVID parental questionnaire we sent out via School Spider. We had a really large take up and the responses made very interesting reading. We know how much school time many of our children have missed in 2020, but the impact is so different for all of us. We have received some excellent ideas from you (*Thank you for this — we will be reflecting carefully on these in the coming weeks*) but I thought you might be interested to read some of the data the survey returned:

- 45% of those who responded agreed or strongly agreed that the closures in March had a negative effect on their child's learning.
- 35% of those who responded agreed or strongly agreed that the closures in March had a negative effect on their child's mental health.
- 28% of those who responded agreed or strongly agreed that they have felt anxious about children returning to school this year.
- 19% of those who responded agreed or strongly agreed that their child had felt anxious about school at some point this term.
- 97% of those who responded agreed or strongly agreed that their children were happy in school.
- 96% of those who responded agreed or strongly agreed that their children feel safe at school.

We have also completed a survey of the children and I am in the process of looking through this data at the moment. When I have completed it, I will share some of the things with you on Headlines (probably in the new year). At school we are currently testing the children (*as we always do in December*) and soon we will have measurable data to show teachers what the time away from school actually means in terms of the gaps we have to address in the coming months and years. As many of you may know, the government has given a not insignificant sum of money to schools to help catch up, and I thought you may be interested to know some of the things we are spending this money on to help the children:

- Forest schools throughout the year
- We are currently appointing a new cover supervisor to help share the burden of COVID related absence and support children who have found the return to school stressful
- New reading scheme books to help enthuse the children in catching up on reading that they may have missed.
- New online reading intervention licenses for children who have fallen behind in reading and spelling.
- New IT in KS1 which will allow us to loan out more

devices to families who may be struggling with remote learning whilst awaiting tests or isolating as a result of a bubble closure or a positive COVID test in the household.

- Small group or 1:1 personal tuition in Maths for a small number of children who have fallen significantly behind.

So what is the school concentrating on this year?

Each year the school has a development plan which focuses our attention on the things we want to improve. This year the targets on our school development plan are as follows:

- **Target 1:** Pupil and staff social and emotional health.
- **Target 2:** Developing our curriculum
- **Target 3:** School recovery following the lost learning caused by school closures in March 2020.
- **Target 4:** Reviewing and improving the provision for children with SEND (special educational needs and disability) in the classroom.

In Class Christmas Parties

Thank you to everyone who has paid so far by ParentPay. We are asking for a contribution of £1 per child towards the Christmas parties:

- Tuesday 15th December (Years 3 and 4)
- Wednesday 16th December (Years 5 and 6)
- Thursday 17th December (Years FS, 1 and 2)

Remember that children can wear their own (warm) party clothes on their day.

Christmas Cards and gifts

Don't forget that we are trying to keep Christmas cards within each class bubble this year and Tuesday 15th December will be the last day we can safely quarantine post to send home. Some of you have asked about sending gifts to members of staff. As always, this is never necessary, but for those of you who wish to do so, the same deadline of Tuesday 15th stands should you wish teachers to take them home for Christmas.

Fundraising

We are also participating in the Big PTA Raffle and details can be found on the flyer. You could be in with a chance to win up to £5000 which helps raise much needed funds for our school.

Christmas Jumper Day

This year it's on the 11th December in support of Save the Children. We are asking for a £2 cash donation and children can wear a Christmas jumper with their uniform.

School Lunch Arrangements

When we return in January after the Christmas break, FS, Y1 and Y2 will have a hot dinner in the school hall and KS2 will go back to having hot packed lunches in their classrooms. Menus can be found on the school website. If your child wishes to swap to school dinners (or to packed lunches) please email nicola.kinsey@kirkleeseducation.uk with your child's class number by Monday 7th December.

(continued on page 2)

Milkiness

Milk is my favourite drink. If your child likes milk too and would like to enjoy it in the spring term 2021 (4th January—26th March 2021) please go to www.parentpay.com to make a payment of £11.50. All milk **must** be ordered by Friday 11th December 2020. Please note that orders can not be taken after this date. If the milk pay item is not on your ParentPay account, it is either because:

- ◆ Your child's 5th birthday is on or after 27th March, in which case it is free and we will order it for them automatically.
- ◆ Your child receives Free School Meals (FSM) in which case you need to phone the school on 01484 850671 or email Mrs. Kinsey in the school office on nicola.kinsey@kirkleeseducation.uk to order milk for your child.

A big thank you and good luck to Miss. Sixsmith who works in our school office on Thursday and Friday mornings. Sadly, she is leaving us at Christmas, and whilst we are all sad to see her go, we're delighted she has found a new role and wish her all the best. I hope she takes many happy memories of the children and staff at Meltham CE with her.

Christmas Virtual Christmas Store

Thank you to everyone who has made a kind donation to the dwindling school funds through our Virtual Christmas Store on ParentPay. The creations are out of this world and I really hope you enjoy what your children have created when they bring them home. For those of you who do not use ParentPay, we will put collection boxes outside classrooms in Years 1, 2 and Reception. For Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 donations can be sent in with the children in an envelope and we can follow the usual quarantine rules before we count it up and put it to good use.

Christmas poster competition winner

Many of the children took part in Zest for Print's Christmas poster competition. Grace in Year 4 was the winner (*and will be enjoying her prizes I'm sure! Congratulations Grace*). If you remember, their hope was to put up a poster in every house in Meltham to brighten Christmas in the village and they have delivered each child in school a copy which will be sent home today.

Swimming update

School swimming for Year 4 is currently still on hold. We are hopeful for a start in the new year and will keep you updated when we know something.

Flu vaccinations.

A hectic day of flu vaccination sprays was completed on Monday and the children were wonderful. The nursing team commented on how polite and well behaved your children all were which is testament both to you and to the school. If your child missed their vaccination spray, catchup sessions can be organized by contacting Child Health on 0303 003 4381

COVID-19

Remember that if anyone in your household develops the symptoms of COVID-19 (*a high temperature; a new continuous cough which last more than an hour; or a loss or change to the sense of smell or taste*) then the entire household must isolate and children should not come to school. You should access a COVID test and await the results together in isolation.

How to book a COVID test if you need one?

Tests can be booked online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

You can also contact 119 for advice and local advice (*including locations of mobile testing units in Kirklees*) can be accessed at:

<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/health-and-well-being/covid19-test-and-trace.aspx>.

Remote learning and isolation

Mr. Aspey's standing message (*just in case!*):

"As you know... Purple Mash is now the system teachers are using to send homework and remote learning home. This replaces work being sent out via school Spider. If your child is required to isolate you will receive a learning timetable (through school Spider) that reflects as closely as possible what the children would be doing in school. Your child will find all the work, resources and the timetable in their area of Purple Mash. Using Purple Mash they can complete the work and hand it back to their teacher.

Purple Mash includes a Parent Portal for you to keep track of what your child is asked to do. Follow the link below or use the QR code to access a selection of guides and help videos. We hope these guides for Purple Mash will help make remote learning a lot easier for you. The guides include: Parent Portal, Finding work set, Hand in work from Purple Mash app, Hand in work (Tablet, Phone) and Guide to Mini Mash (For Foundation stage parents.)"

<https://tinyurl.com/Melthguides>

Pupil and parent wellbeing

This one is always important at the moment, so I've left it on from last week: Please see attached the following link we have been sent by Young Minds, which gives lots of help and guidance on getting support for mental health during the ongoing pandemic:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/looking-after-yourself/coronavirus-and-mental-health/>

This one is also from Young Minds and is a parent helpfinder, specifically aimed at helping parents support children during the pandemic. It can help generate advice based on your responses:

https://youngminds.org.uk/supporting-parents-helpfinder/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=supporting_parents&utm_content=december20

Mrs Watson has also come across this free course—How to be happier. Exploring ways to be happier and cope better with life's ups and downs.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/how-to-be-happier-with-tal-ben-shahar-tickets-126889801813>

Have a lovely weekend
Mr Gibbins