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14 September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

First of all can I say it has been wonderful to have the children back. I think all the staff were a bit anxious for the start of term and worried that we would have children who would find it difficult coming back into school. In both schools, it has been an absolute delight to see how happy and excited the children are to be back. I love being on the gates at the start and end of the day, seeing the children waving and smiling as they come into school. It genuinely is the highlight of my day.

Just so parents are aware, hand sanitiser is continuously available in the classroom, and teachers and support staff clean the classrooms throughout the day. Playground equipment is also cleaned after each use.

Can I say a big thank you to all parents for the patience you have shown whilst we work out our new arrangements. The first day in both schools at pick up time was a bit difficult but now our systems seem to be running well.

Our new Covid systems and procedures are new for us all and throughout this on-going pandemic, things will need to change and our systems will need to adapt. Please bear with us.

I want to clarify to all parents the reasons why children may be sent home by school and subsequently must be tested:

- If your child has a high temperature (37.8C or above),
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If your child has any of these symptoms, you must keep them off school and either order a home test or book an appointment at a drive through test site. You must get the test within the first 5 days of having symptoms. You can book a test via: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/> . If you cannot access the internet, a test can be arranged by phoning 119.

If school notices your child has any of these symptoms, they will be put into isolation here at school and parents will be phoned to collect the child and any siblings.

Children who have displayed symptoms cannot return to school unless school has received confirmation of a negative test, or 10 days have elapsed since the first day of the symptoms.

We are currently working on a system of online learning, paper learning and virtual learning at both schools. The online learning used during the school closure period is still available for all year groups on the websites. We are currently trialling virtual real time learning for the Katesgrove bubble who are at home presently. A Microsoft Form will be coming to you over the next week asking if your child would have access to an electronic device and the internet. This is so we can ensure the learning we set up is accessible to all.

Thanks to all parents for your co-operation regarding the wearing of face masks. We know this is not always easy but really appreciate you supporting the school. We are just trying to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Please can we ask parents to not use their mobile phones whilst on the school site. This is obviously to ensure the safety of all children.

Lunchtimes are working well and staff have the flexibility to slightly extend the lunch to ensure children have plenty of time to eat. Our younger children are trialling eating in the halls and our older children remain eating in their classrooms. Please can I remind parents that we are healthy schools. The children should not have chocolate bars, fizzy drinks or sugary soft drinks eg, Fruit Shoots as part of a lunch. Fruit smoothie drinks and water should be the only drinks in lunch boxes. Please can I remind parents that we do not allow nuts in school as we have several children in both schools with severe nut allergies.

On PE days please ensure your child is either not wearing earrings or they are taped over. Staff cannot help children to remove earrings. Please can I also remind parents that children should be wearing plain silver or gold studs only.

We are currently planning virtual parents evening for later this term and will keep you posted on how we will do this.

As a reminder to you all, please remember that the Federation is here to help you and we know this is a turbulent time for many. We know from the news that many people are losing their jobs. If you find yourself in financial difficulty or hardship, please contact school. We are incredibly discreet and can help you with food and hygiene packs as well as clothes, and can also signpost you to organisations that can help.

As I have said previously, it has been a pleasure to be back and have both schools back up and running. I would like to say an enormous thanks to our teaching staff, support staff, administration team and in particular, the caretaking team for working incredibly hard over the summer to ensure both schools were Covid secure for the start of term.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Lisa Telling  
Executive Headteacher  
The Kennet Federation