

Seghill First School Newsletter May 2020 edition 1

Friday 01 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

We hope you have enjoyed spending time together recently, even if it has been due to the current lockdown conditions. The photographs and messages you sent us certainly look like you have been enjoying the good weather we've had recently- walking, bike rides, baking, making, painting and exploring all look like great fun.

Our school continues to be closed due to lack of demand. We will continue to review the situation to see if we need to re-open in order to provide care for families who are in any of the three categories defined by the government and listed below-

- Category 1 any pupil with an EHCP;
- Category 2 any pupil with an allocated social worker;
- Category 3 any pupil who is the child of a key worker.

Three of our children are now attending Seaton Delaval First School. If you need a place for your child and they are not already attending Seaton Delaval First School, please let us know.

On behalf of all staff and governors, I want to say how much we appreciate your support and kindness. The daily stream of pictures and news sent in via emails and Tapestry cheers us all up no end. Posting them on the school's Facebook page has been a great way to share what you have been up to. You have also sent us many lovely messages telling us how much you miss school and the daily interactions. Please be assured that these feelings are mutual as we are missing all of you too.

We hope you enjoyed the message that we sent to the children (posted on the school's Facebook page). We loved making it. Your comments were much appreciated. We were thrilled to see the message we received from Lucy, Tom, Alex, Lauren and Matthew.

Staff are coming in to school every week to make welfare calls. This usually happens on a Friday. Please do not be alarmed if you receive a call from us. We are simply checking that everyone is safe and well and offering help if you need it. It is also a great chance for staff to speak to you and the children. However, we continue to find it impossible to contact a very small number of parents as we get no response from the telephone numbers or email address that you have given us. When we call or email you, please reply. We do not wish to intrude but we do need to know that you are safe.

We really have no idea when school will re-open. We won't speculate and will continue to follow Government advice. If we receive any further updates, we will always post them on our website, Facebook page or send them to you via Parentmail, so please follow them closely. One thing that we have agreed is that when we are all allowed to get together, we will arrange something to mark the end of these challenging times and the start of a new chapter.

And finally, stay safe, stay positive and stay in touch. Look out for one another and take care.
With love and best wishes,

Tracey Chappell
Headteacher

Contacting school

Thank you for all of the fantastic photographs and messages you have sent us. Please keep sending them in so we can see the children and find out what they have been up to.

We can be contacted in a number of different ways-

- **0191 237 0419**- leave a message and it will be picked up and followed up;
- the school email address is checked every day admin@seghill.northumberland.sch.uk
- by uploading pictures and news on to **Tapestry** using your Tapestry log in details (yellow and orange class only).

You can contact teachers in key stages 1 and 2 directly using these addresses-

- anna.bell1@school360.co.uk
- amanda.lyons@school360.co.uk
- pamela.knowles@school360.co.uk

Please continue to contact Mrs Kembrey and Mrs Askew via Tapestry.

Please send all **work-related questions directly to the class teachers** using their contact details above. If you are sending a **picture or news**, please send it to the **class teacher** directly using their contact details above **and** to the **school admin address** so I can access it and publish it.

Permission to publish

If you send us a picture, we assume this means we have your permission to publish it on the school Facebook page and the school website. If you do not want your picture to be published, please inform us in your email so we know not to publish it.

Email addresses and telephone numbers

We continue to find it impossible to contact a very small number of parents as we get no response from the telephone numbers or email address that you have given us. If you have changed your number or email address, or if you are not receiving calls and emails from us, **please contact us with your new details and we will update the system.**

Parentmail

We tend to use Parentmail to send out texts and emails when we need to contact all parents. If you are not on Parentmail, you are missing out on this service. If you are not on Parentmail, again, **please contact us with your details and we will update the system to include you.**

School Facebook page

We are using the **school Facebook page** to share pictures and news. Hopefully you will have seen the amazing things that our children have been up to. Please keep an eye out for updates, including **Mr Dowson's daily PE challenge.**

Easter decorating competition

Thank you for all of the marvellous and creative entries we received. Pictures of all entries were posted on the school's Facebook page. Certificates were emailed to winners. Prizes will be dropped off by staff when the restrictions on essential journeys have been lifted.

Stay home > protect the NHS > save lives

School360 and Tapestry

School360

We are using **school360 in key stages 1 and 2** to share work with you. Although there have been some initial problems for some parents when logging in, it does seem to be working well. If you are experiencing issues, please email Mrs Bell, Mrs Lyons and Mrs Knowles directly and they will be able to help you.

Tapestry

We are continuing to use **Tapestry** to share work in **Nursery and Reception**. Mrs Askew and Mrs Kembrey have been over the moon with the contributions you have sent in so far. If you are experiencing issues, please email Mrs Askew or Mrs Kembrey via Tapestry and they will be able to help you.

Safeguarding

The school arrangements for safeguarding and child protection continue in line with our child protection policy. If you need to **report or discuss concerns about a child**, or details are-

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Tracey Chappell

email: safeguarding.seghill@gmail.com

tel: 07785 180484 or 0191 2370419

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Pamela Knowles

email: safeguarding.seghill@gmail.com

tel: 07785 180484 or 0191 2370419

In the **event of an emergency** the following colleague from a neighbouring school can also be contacted to provide advice-

The Designated Safeguarding Lead at Holywell Village First School is: Sarah Brett

email: safeguarding.holywell@school360.co.uk tel: 07385 793694

Eligibility to Free School Meals

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 receive their school meal for free. This is due to the government's Universal Infant Free School Meals initiative. Parents do not need to apply for this.

Some children are entitled to an income related Free School Meals. This means that Free School Meals are available to pupils in receipt of, or whose parents are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
 - Provided you have an annual net income of no more than £7,400
 - This is assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods
- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit
 - Provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on
 - Paid four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

If you think that your child is eligible for Free School Meals, please follow the link below to Northumberland County Council's website, where you will be asked to complete an online application form. They will assess their application. We have no say over whether Free School Meals status is granted or not.

[link to Northumberland County Council's free school meals page](#)

Supermarket voucher scheme for children who are entitled to Free School Meals

The Government has introduced a national **supermarket voucher scheme** in partnership with Edenred. This is for children who are entitled to an income related Free School Meals.

Vouchers can be redeemed at-

Asda
Marks and Spencer

Tesco
Waitrose

Sainsbury's
Morrisons.

We have told that Aldi has now joined the scheme. The Department for Education continues to work to get more shops to join the scheme as soon as possible.

Parents should receive £15 per child per week via an e-voucher, which can be redeemed using a voucher code. Schools have been asked to place bulk orders so that parents will receive 4 codes for 4 weeks in one go rather than 4 separate codes. The idea behind this is to improve efficiency. Unfortunately, this has done anything but improve efficiency.

Some parents have come across problems when they have tried to redeem their vouchers. For example, a parent with two children will receive £120 in total for 4 weeks. Some supermarkets will only allow £90 to be redeemed at any time, leaving £30 still on the voucher still to be redeemed. If this is the case, you will need to select a different supermarket to redeem the extra £30. I know this is frustrating but unfortunately, this is down to each supermarket and not within my control.

If you continue to experience problems, please email me and let me know. The local authority has allocated a specialist member of staff to deal with Edenred on behalf of schools. I will pass your queries on to him.

Please be aware that if you ring Edenred, it is a **premium rate number**. I rang them earlier this month to try to sort out queries and the call cost me £42. There is also a queue to get on to the Edenred website. Waiting times are usually about an hour to actually get on to their website.

I deal with queries about vouchers every day and it takes up a huge amount of time. I don't mind doing this if it resolves the issues that parents are experiencing. But I must bring up one issue and ask for your help. I have repeatedly emailed parents to share information with you. Many of you have emailed me back to say you have received my emails and responded to my requests for information. However, a number of people do not reply to emails and do not respond to requests for information. We are all busy and we are all having to find different ways to work, but I don't think it's too much to ask for you to reply to an email to say that you have or have not received your voucher. I will continue to order vouchers and work with those parents who respond to emails and comply with requests for information. Due to the pressures on my time, I will no longer order vouchers for parents who do not respond to emails and who do not reply with requests for information.

The next set of vouchers will be ordered and should be with parents by approximately 14 May. Please check your **spam and junk folders** as most parents have found their vouchers in these folders.

Newsletters

We send out our newsletters fortnightly using Parentmail. Each newsletter is posted on the homepage of the school website. We will include a link to the newsletter on the school's Facebook page.

The next newsletter, May edition 2, will be circulated on Friday 15 May.