Wednesday 2 September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

We have welcomed Y5 into school today who have been an absolute pleasure to work with! They have embraced new systems and procedures very well and we look forward to welcoming back the rest of our school tomorrow. I am writing to you to share some important information so that the start of our new term continues to run as smoothly as possible.

Behaviour Policy

Schools have been advised to update their behaviour policies in order to support the return of all pupils to full time education this September. We have amended our behaviour policy so that expectations in terms of behaviour both in and out of lessons are clear. We expect all pupils to:

* + **Show respect to others at all times**
  + **Follow instructions the first time they are given**
  + **Help others to learn**
  + **Actively listen**
  + **Actively learn**

These expectations will be made clear to pupils on their return and will be used by all staff to promote consistent, effective behaviour for learning. Where behaviour has fallen below what is expected, the hierarchy of sanctions will be followed by staff, which is explained on the attached document. The biggest change to note is that when expectations have not been met, we will not be able to issue an ‘N’, which previously meant a lunchtime detention, because we cannot allow ‘bubbles’ to cross. Therefore, in this instance, pupils will spend some of their free time, in their own classroom, with a member of staff, reflecting on their behaviour and completing a reflection sheet. This will be followed up with a note in their journal and a phone call home so that you are aware of what has happened in school. The behaviour at Bellingham Middle School is generally excellent, and I am sure we will not need to use these measures often, but it is important that you are aware of any changes to policies at this time.

In light of COVID-19, we will not be able to provide a homework club for pupils to complete their homework as ‘bubbles’ cannot cross and we haven’t got enough resources to staff one for each bubble. Therefore, until further notice, staff will not go through the hierarchy of sanctions if a child does not hand homework in. The completion and submission of homework will be rewarded in alternative ways.

Illness

It is important that any pupil displaying symptoms of coronavirus does not come into school, but self-isolates until they can be tested. Should your child become unwell with symptoms whilst at school, we will isolate them here with a first-aider and contact you immediately as you will need to collect them straight away. The symptoms of COVID-19 are a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste. All children can be tested but children under the age of 11 will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit. Tests can be booked online through the NHS testing and tracing for coronavirus website (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus>) or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. We have received a small number of testing kits in school but will only be able to offer a home test kit to those who we believe may have barriers to accessing a test elsewhere. Once your child has received their results, we ask that you inform school immediately.

If someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to COVID-19, they can stop self-isolating. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating.

If someone tests positive, they should follow the ‘stay at home’ government guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>) and must continue to self-isolate for 7 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

As a school, should we have a confirmed case of COVID-19, we will contact our local health protection team who will carry out a rapid risk assessment and guide us through the actions we need to take. The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home. You will, of course, be kept informed of any confirmed cases.

I apologise as this is not the most ‘cheerful’ of letters but I hope you appreciate it is an important one so that we can welcome our full school community back safely and with continuous high expectations.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Hamilton

Headteacher