



Spring 1 Newsletter

Newsletter

08/01/2021

Rednal Hill Junior School www.rednalhilljuniors.com

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Introduction

Dear families...

I hope this newsletter finds you all safe and well.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your calm and measured reaction to the awful news of another lockdown. Luckily, we were in a position to act very quickly and children of key workers and those requiring additional support were in school and learning from Tuesday, and remote learning for children based at home was able to commence on the same day.

Phone Calls home

During the last school closure from March 2020, you will recall that teachers, teaching assistants and pastoral staff regularly made phone calls to children at home. This enabled school staff and children to stay connected, discuss home-learning and check-in on a regular basis. Our revised remote/home learning offer using the Microsoft Teams platform offers regular communication opportunities for teaching staff with children and families through both the live sessions and chat function. For those pupils engaging actively and regularly in the live lessons, the platform enables regular direct communication and connection with their teacher without the need for a phone call. Participation in Teams live lessons also offers an interactive teaching and learning experience which is more in line with what the children would receive in school, with teaching staff available for support and guidance.

When can I expect a phone call home?

Please expect a phone call home next week from a member of our Pastoral Team if your child has not been joining or actively participating in live sessions. We believe that involvement in these live sessions is really important to pupil wellbeing, development and learning at this challenging time. A member of our staff will be keen to check-in with you and your child and unpick any difficulties you are experiencing with accessing the home-learning platform and activities. Children's home-learning access will be regularly monitored by school staff, and we will continue to contact families by phone throughout January and February if we are concerned about your child's lack of engagement in home-learning.

This pandemic continues to challenge but also develop our resilience, and we are all acutely aware right now that difficulties can be overcome when we work together effectively. Please let us help you to ensure that your child benefits from the best possible home-learning experience they can through this current closure, and their momentum and thirst for learning from the Autumn term is maintained. If you are experiencing difficulties with home-learning please make us aware as soon as possible so that we can try and help you by contacting: enquiry@rednalhilljuniors.com or 07958485137 (office mobile)

If your child has been identified as requiring additional support and is based at home, you should expect to receive regular phone calls from school which will be made by the Pastoral Team. Additional support and provision for those pupils with identified Special Educational Needs who are based at home is also being considered and developed at this time, and we will be in contact with families about what this provision will look like as soon as possible.

Home Learning

This week has been an incredibly different week and not one that we had fully anticipated at the end of the Autumn term. Following the Governments' announcement on Monday evening, we have prepared and conducted our very first week of interactive online learning for pupils that are at home using our online learning platform 'Teams'. As a school, we would like to pay huge thanks to all of our families that have supported this new way of working and to pay a special thanks to all of our wonderful pupils who have interacted and accessed their learning with positivity, dedication and commitment. We could not be prouder of our pupils!

Our home learning team staff have also worked incredibly hard this week and have endeavoured to provide all classes with online lessons, pre-recorded lessons and independent activities for pupils to complete – all of which are in line with the curriculum. They have all embraced this new and challenging way of working with determination to ensure that pupils are accessing quality learning. The feedback that we have had to date has been positive and we have no doubt that this approach to teaching your children will go from strength to strength.

We are aware that in delivering lessons in this new way, that there will be some challenges and difficulties – particularly in the first instance! Can we please ask for your support in this and to ask for your patience whilst we all work together as a team to sort any issues that have occurred this week. The world of technology is definitely powerful in this current climate; but, as we know, it can be problematic. Please rest assured that we are working hard to resolve any issues and can we ask that any reoccurring problems that you have surrounding this are directed towards the school office. The chat function on 'Teams' is a communication tool for the children to interact with teachers. As part of our policy, teachers are able to delete any comments from the chat if they are considered inappropriate.

At this time, we would really appreciate your views and feedback regarding the home learning offer. Can you please complete the form below to help us gather these views. This will enable us to continue to refine our provision. Please can these forms be completed and returned by 10am Monday 11th.

[Home Learning Offer Form](#)

Did you know you can access Teams on an Xbox or PlayStation?

Xbox Guidance

1. Plug a keyboard into the Xbox USB slot
2. Go to 'My games and apps'
3. Find Microsoft Edge and select
4. Log into Teams using the web address <https://teams.microsoft.com>
5. Log in using your Teams account details

PlayStation Guidance

1. Find the PlayStation internet browser icon (It is WWW with dots around it)
2. Press the PlayStation logo on the controller
3. Go to the library and find options for games and applications
4. Go into applications and you will find the internet browser
5. Type <https://teams.microsoft.com> into the browser and log in with your account details

The browser on both consoles can be used like any other menu or game: navigated around by using the joystick, clicking links with the A button, and typing in text by using the on-screen keyboard.

But they become much more useful when a keyboard or mouse is plugged into the console, at which point they're almost indistinguishable from any other computer. Recent PlayStations and Xboxes both have USB ports that should be able to take any keyboard that would plug into a more traditional computer.

On both consoles, you should also be able to use a headset to chat, too. That can be plugged in through the controller, which includes a port at the bottom.

Children Attending School

As you will know, school remains open for pupils of key workers and vulnerable pupils. These pupils returned to school on Tuesday and for the staff that are currently in school, it was an absolute pleasure to see them. We really must recognise and praise the resilience and positivity of these children – entering school on Tuesday morning, when things are different, was massively challenging; however, they did so with excellent attitudes and smiles on their faces. They have adapted to, in some instances, new rooms and new faces very quickly and they have engaged in lessons wonderfully. The work that they have already produced, in just a week, is exemplary! Keep up the excellent work!

Please do read the new and revised '[Lockdown 3 - Parent Guidance](#)' for more information on the organisation of the school day.

Application for Key Worker Place

We understand that it is never ideal, trying to work from home as well as home-school. However, the 'Pods' are growing and are near twice the size they were at the start of the Spring 2020 lockdown. We already know this new variant of the virus is more transferrable, and ideally we need to have minimum staff and children in school, to keep everyone safe.

The need to keep numbers in school at a minimum is paramount when looking at the following information:

- Boris Johnson has described primary schools as 'Vectors of transmission'.
- The 'r' rate for 5-9 year olds almost doubled in Birmingham from December 7th to the 27th.
- In an investigation by the Times Educational Supplement (TES), for a period spanning from the week ending 19th October to the week ending 20th November, Birmingham school staff were found to be more than three times higher than the local average for COVID 19 positive tests.

So please, when making an application for a key worker place, can we request that you only do so if you absolutely need to. Please note, in order to maintain our home learning provision, the pod numbers and sizes are finite. Proof of Key Worker status will be required for any new applicant.

School Office Closed to Visitors

For the time being to ensure the safety and welfare of staff, the office is closed to visitors. We want to communicate with parents as best as we can in this challenging time so can we please ask that the majority of your conversations with school staff are via telephone or e-mail to ensure safety.

There will be a member of staff on each playground every morning should you wish to speak to someone directly. If you use this channel of communication can you please ensure you recognise social distancing protocols. Office e-mail: enquiry@rednalhilljuniors.com Office mobile: 07958485137

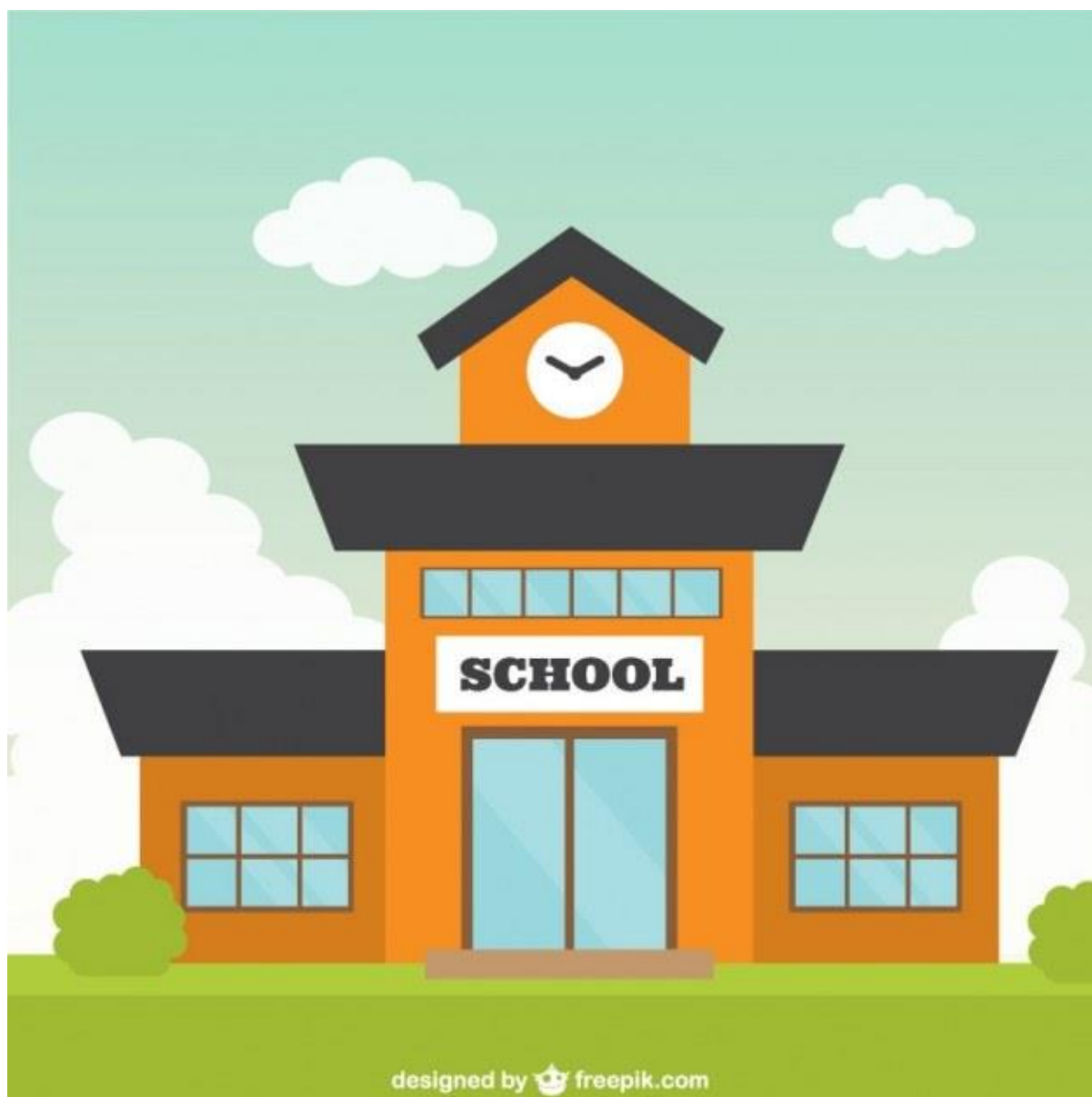
Primary Assessment Changes



Year 6 SATs have been cancelled for the 2020-21 academic year. They will be reinstated in 2021-22.

Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) will not be statutory. Here at Rednal we have decided (if it's still available) to take the optional test during June 2021, [for more information click here](#)

School contact details



If you would like to contact us please see details below:

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