



The Priory School Newsletter

Spring 1 - Friday 14th January 2022

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HEADTEACHER UPDATE

Happy New Year!

As I cast my mind back to last year, it is wonderful that this January we are fully open. The children's positive attitude and enthusiasm is a real antidote to these grey January days.



I don't want to dwell for too long on the challenges we are facing. There is nothing new to add to my letter earlier in the week. We've had more positive cases amongst our staff team in the last 2 weeks than in the previous 18 months and we are once again in 'outbreak' status. Our Priory staff, as ever, continue to work tirelessly to support the children and cover additional duties where necessary.

I'm sure we are all hoping that the situation will settle down soon and allow us to return to a greater sense of normality. Thank you for playing your part in trying to reduce the number of infectious cases coming into school. Our current measures will be in place for a further 2 weeks.

My message to the children and staff at the start of 2022 is simply to keep on keeping on.

Mr Ruffle

Worship Value Peace

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid. Do not be discouraged for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1v9

This is a great motto text for the coming year.

Peace is our chosen value for Spring 1. Year 2 helped to perform a dramatised reading of Jesus' teaching about 'worrying' and how we must not worry about tomorrow but trust in God. We were reminded of the winter flowers already coming through in our gardens, such as snowdrops and cyclamen. If God cares for the flowers of the field, how much more will He provide for His dearly loved children?



Sia and Daisy in Year 4 wrote a beautiful prayer about peace to close our worship.

School Mission Statement

"Inspiring a generation to learn, flourish and achieve in a caring, Christian community"



Y6 Parliament Trip - virtual!

It was disappointing that Y6 had their Parliament trip cancelled but the virtual alternative was extremely well done.

Y6 very much enjoyed their virtual 'live' tour of the Palace of Westminster and learnt a lot about the democratic process in our country. We are grateful that Christopher Chope MP gave up his time to answer questions from the children and talk about some of the laws which he has helped create. The children learnt how they can have a voice and a say in the decisions that affect all of us. I know some of them will be contacting Mr Chope in the near future.



We very much hope to rearrange the trip to the UK's 'seats of power' later in the summer term.

Spring Head Pupils and Prefects

The new Head Pupils for Spring Term have been appointed. Congratulations to Hattie and George for their outstanding contribution to school life, not only since they have been in Y6 but throughout their time at Priory School. George excels at sport, but always looks to include others in any game or activity. I expect Hattie will make a very strong leader in the future, as she is so respectful and thoughtful. Her House Captain speech was one of the best I have ever heard.

Year 6 are a truly exceptional cohort and our Spring prefects are:

Canterbury - Alisha, Layla and Jessie

Winchester - Archie, Oscar and Alfie

Salisbury - Stanley and Mabelle

York - Betsy and Siena



Daily Mile Track Active Dorset Funding

It was very exciting yesterday to have our new running track marked out, thanks to extra funding from Active Dorset. This track will be used, alongside our skipping ropes, to provide additional opportunities in the week to be fit and active.

One lap is a distance of 225m. This means if a child does 7 laps then they have completed a mile, give or take.





Promoting Walk to School and Safe Parking

We're still continuing to highlight this initiative, especially with the news that, from the end of January, Bargates will be closed for 3 months! I am sure that many other local roads will be even more congested as a result.

We heard from one of our neighbours on Wick Lane, just before Christmas, that a number of drivers have been parking irresponsibly at collection times. It may well be that these are Priory parents. I know for many of us it is stating the obvious, but:

- **Please do not just stop in the middle of Wick Lane while your child jumps out.**
- **Please do not obstruct neighbours' entrances by parking in driveways - many of whom need access at all times. It also shows a lack of consideration for others, which is not a hallmark of our community.**



Since the removal of our lollipop man, there have been a number of near misses at the zebra crossing and all drivers need to take every possible precaution at these busy times.

Don't forget to earn your monthly WOW badge by:

- **Walking**
- **Cycling**
- **Wheeling**
- **Scooting**
- **Park and Stride**

You simply need to travel sustainably to school at least once a week, every week.

What are the benefits of walking to school?

Walking to school helps children feel happier and healthier. They arrive refreshed, healthy and ready to learn. More families walking means fewer cars on the road, helping to reduce congestion and pollution at the school gates.

What if we can't walk to school?

If you live too far away or don't have time to walk the whole way to school, you can Park and Stride to help your child earn their WOW badge. Simply park or hop off public transport **at least ten minutes** away from the school and walk the remaining journey.

What is a WOW badge?

There is a unique WOW badge to earn every month if you walk, wheel, cycle, scoot or Park and Stride at least once a week. Each badge has been designed by a pupil from across the UK.

For more information, parents can access the following link: <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/walk-to-school/parents-info>





Y2 to 6 Autumn Assessments sent home

We have today sent home with your child a copy of their Autumn assessment paper. You will be able to see, on the day the test was completed, what your child was able to do and which questions they struggled with.

Why are we sending test papers home?

We hope that in knowing the areas and types of questions which your child still finds hard, you may be able to support them more effectively at home i.e. by setting up specific IXL activities linked to that skill or giving them similar questions to practice.

What allowances have been made because of COVID?

These tests have been set at the standard National Curriculum level for each year group, so they provide you with a helpful reminder of what the current expectations are. Although the pandemic has affected so many things in education, these age-related expectations have not changed. Statutory assessments in the summer (EYFS, Y1 phonics, Y2 SATs, Y4 multiplications check and Y6 SATs) are all still going ahead.

As a leadership team though, **we have analysed the whole school's results and we are very pleased with how most children's learning has continued to progress during this difficult time.** Your children are to be commended for their hard work, especially those who kept plugging away during lockdown.

In the first set of data since the start of the pandemic, we are delighted to report that in the Autumn Y2 phonics screening 90% of children passed. Across BCP schools as a whole the average was 83.7%.

My child has an Individual Education Plan and has not received a test paper. Why not?

In some cases, where your child is working on a personalised curriculum due to an additional learning need, these standard tests were not completed as they are not appropriate.

Progress for children with an additional learning need is measured against the targets in your child's individual education plan.

I am disappointed with how my child performed and I don't know what to do.

You should not expect full marks as these tests are set with end of year expectations in mind and we have only completed one term.

Your child is not alone if they found these tests hard. Please bear in mind that your child may have been poorly at the time or just returned from a 10 day isolation. Our whole school attendance during December was down at 80%, meaning that, on average, children were missing a day of school a week and this has consequences in terms of retaining learning.

What are you doing to help my child catch up?

We are working hard to support all children in school, particularly those most affected by the pandemic - **but we will need your engagement as well.** Staff absence is high and our designated COVID recovery funding for 2021-22 is only £4,535.

This is not to make anyone feel guilty, especially hardworking single parents, but our data shows that children who are supported with reading, times tables and homework at home are the children who make the most progress in school.

At the end of this half-term, children will complete a 'Spring Assessment'. Updated information from these tests will be shared with parents during our Spring parents' evening and this is a key time to raise any concerns, if they have not been addressed by then.

We do need to keep these assessments for our records. Please return them to school by Tuesday 1st February.





Isolation Update - What 5 Days Really Means

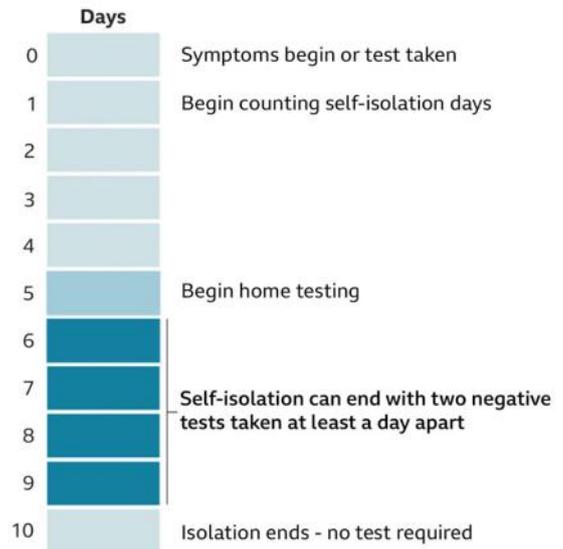
Interpreting the dark arts of Government COVID guidance is never easy. The new '5 day' rule is a definite case in point, as the helpful diagram shows.

If your child tests positive on a LFD before school on a Monday morning, they have to isolate immediately but this does NOT count as day 1 - it is day zero.

Your child is not able to come out of isolation until Sunday at the earliest and this assumes a negative LFD on Saturday and Sunday morning.

Our experience to date has shown, many LFD are still returning positive results on day 8 and 9, so early release is not guaranteed.

How five-day isolation rule works in England



Year to Date - 91.75%

Spring 1 Diary Dates

Date	Time	Event
Monday 17th January	pm	Year 3 swimming lessons commence at 2 Riversmeet Leisure Centre
Wednesday 19th January	pm	Year 2 and 3 Relax Kids
Friday 21st January	pm	Autumn 2 House Reward for Winchester (Sardines and Play Park) Dolphins Vision Screening
Tuesday 1st February	all day	Mental Health Awareness Day
Tuesday 8th February	all day	Safer Internet Day
Mon 14th - Fri 18th Feb	all week	Spring Assessment Week
Mon 21st - Fri 25th Feb	all week	School closed for February half-term holiday