



Fir Tree Newsletter

Issue 7
17th
December
2020



Dear Parents,

This term seems to have flown by and how action packed it has been too.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for all the support you have shown to the school over what can only be described as a challenging term. In light of the government guidance allowing households to mix over the festive period we hope that you have the opportunity to enjoy time with loved ones.

Although we have been restricted, Christmas has certainly been celebrated at Fir Tree nonetheless! This week has seen delicious Christmas Dinners within our bubbles and the Panto came to us this year, oh yes it did! What a lovely way to end the term. I wanted to share with you our school Christmas Tree too; Miss Hayter organized an Art project for every child to decorate a peg for the tree – doesn't it look stunning!

These are on their way home to you today!

I cannot thank yourselves, the staff and the children enough for everything we have accomplished this term and how we have pulled

together as a community. I am incredibly proud to be Headteacher at Fir Tree and we have shown that we have clear systems, routines and communication in place that has enabled our children to still



work to a very high standard with minimal disruption.

One area which I think we could refocus on over the next few weeks is the times in which your children are being dropped off in the mornings. Children without siblings in the school should enter their allocated school gate a couple of minutes before their scheduled start time and not before.

This keeps bubbles separated and minimises the risk of spreading which could result in multiple bubbles having to be sent home. Those with more than one child attending school should ensure that they too are not dropping off too early from their child's earliest class start time.

Whilst being late shouldn't occur anyway – this also can increase the risk of bubbles mixing, so being punctual is as important as ever.

- **Yrs 2/6** 8:30am (not on site/gate before 8:20am)
- **Yrs R/5** 8:40am (not on site/gate before 8:35am)
- **Yrs 1/3** 8:50am (not on site before 8:45am)
- **Yr 4** 9:00am (not on site before 8:55am)

Secondly, we spend all day keeping children separated in bubbles during the school day – please on coming to and leaving school can you ensure that your children stay with you (*preferably 2 metres away from the people in front of you*) and don't run ahead where they suddenly become close to children from other classes.

Hopefully it won't be necessary, however if you need to notify us of a positive result for your child for Covid-19, that occurs before 19th December, then please email the office to office@firtree.newburyacademytrust.org

Finally, I'd ask parents to be aware of the need to stay 2m apart from other parents on leaving the school, it is important that we all follow the guidance in order to stop the spread of the virus. Thanks again for all your support in keeping the school a safe environment for children, parents and staff.

Diary Dates

Please note that our online calendar on the school website is updated regularly.

Thursday 17th December
End of Term 2 – early afternoon finish

Tuesday 5th January
Start of Term 3

February
Safer Internet Day

Teacher Training Days

Friday 18th December 2020

Monday 4th January 2021

Friday 25th June 2021

Please can I just take this opportunity to once again thank you for all your help and support, not to mention your kindness and gifts. I wish all our families and staff a wonderful Christmas break and a very happy New Year from myself and everyone at Fir Tree Primary School. We will see you all back on **Tuesday 5th January** ready for another fantastic term!

Regards,

Lindsay Wood

Headteacher



Holidays During the Christmas Period

I recently asked the Local Authority for guidance on parents travelling abroad during holiday time and subsequently not attending school through quarantining. If parents travel abroad to a country knowing that they have to self-isolate on their return and that this will cause their child to have a further two weeks off school, then the school might want to consider a Fixed Penalty Notice as they (the parents) are knowingly making

that decision.

As parents will not have made an absence request to the school, as the holiday is not during term time, I am currently unaware of any children who may miss school due to the scenario above. On return of such a trip abroad, where quarantining for two weeks will be necessary, I am happy to meet with parents to ascertain more context before deciding on whether to proceed with a request for a Fixed Penalty Notice.

National Assessments

Every year there are various national assessments that the children across the school are required to sit. Never has it been more important to assess the impact of COVID 19 on education, as a result there has been some changes this year with KS1 SATs being cancelled; Year 6 will only be tested in Maths and Reading and Year 4's Multiplication Check will be optional. The dates below are when these are taking place.

- **Year 1 Phonic Assessment – Week Beginning 7th June 2021**
- **Year 4 MTC (Multiplication Times Table Check) – Week Beginning 7th June 2021**
- **Year 6 SATS – Week Beginning 10th May 2020**

Information about these assessments will be shared over the coming months, where the class teachers will explain the arrangements in more detail and how you can support your child. Please pencil the dates from the calendar now into your diaries.



Huge congratulations to Megan in Year 2 who has achieved a 'Blue Peter' badge!

Something I always aspired to achieve when I was little! What an achievement. We love to hear about successes outside of school so please do share them with us!

This term's tips to share with you that we are working on in EYFS to develop children's speech and their language in order for them to listen, learn and progress that you too could employ at home to support your child's development are as follows:



Talking Tips

- Reduce background noise: Turn off the television when playing and talking together. This will help your child to learn to listen.
- **Don't let your child speak with a dummy in their mouth: The dummy will get in the way of talking.**
- Enjoy songs and nursery rhymes together: Especially ones with lots of actions and repetition.
- **Slow down your rate of speech: This will give your child more time to think about what you have said.**



Last Thursday saw a successful 'Christmas Movies and Munchies' event at Fir Tree. It certainly helped us all to get into the Christmas Spirit and make it

more festive! Thank you to the PTA for supporting with organising and running the evening, there was certainly a quick turnaround! The evening raised a fantastic £420 towards our improving the outdoors project. The PTA have also raised £450 through the Fir Tree tea towel sales, which you should now have received. This will be match funded by Vodafone for £350. Bags2School also raised a fabulous £133! We are so lucky to have such a dedicated team of parents who work tirelessly for our school, a huge thank you to them and a big thank you to yourselves too for supporting with such events.



Wellbeing

As mentioned in our last newsletter, the mental health and well-being of our children, staff and families is very important to us. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. So that we can support with you, Miss Martin our Wellbeing Lead has devised a wellbeing parent survey. We would be grateful if you could complete it using the link below:



[Parent Wellbeing Survey](#)

West Berkshire Foodbank

Thank you for all of the fantastic donations made to the school for the West Berkshire Foodbank. These weighed in at 73.9kgs which equates to an impressive **155 meals** that the pupils and staff at Fir Tree Primary have provided for the clients of the Foodbank over the festive period. Thank you to all of our children and parents for your efforts and to Miss Burton for organising the collections.



Here are some photos of the children, busy decorating and putting together the collection boxes:

