



BENCHILL PRIMARY NEWSLETTER CHRISTMAS 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

It is hard to believe that we are almost at the end of the first full term. It has been a very busy term for children, parents and staff as we have all had to get used to school under Covid rules. Everyone has been brilliant adapting to the 'new normal', and while we have had a couple of Covid incidents, the amount of time lost to Covid this term only amounts to just over 1% of the term. I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank everyone for doing their bit to keep us all as safe as possible.



Everyone in school has worked very hard this term, so it is no wonder both staff and children are tired. However, the progress the children have made shows us that it is all worthwhile, with success in results right across the school. I am hopeful that most children will have caught up on any lost learning before the end of this academic year - with your support, the

children's commitment and the hard work of all the staff, I am sure we can do it.



We have also tried to ensure your children are enjoying their time in school. I know our website and social media has reflected some of this, and I hope you have had the opportunity to watch your children perform in their Carol Service. I know they and their teachers worked very hard on them, and thanks to Miss Holt for the recording and making them available to parents.



CURRICULUM

All subject leaders have been developing their subject areas and making sure that all children are accessing an exciting and varied curriculum. We have had a clear focus on Reading and Maths this term, and staff have planned learning so that children can access more or less the same curriculum if a bubble is forced to close and they have to work from home. You will have received more information about this in the Information Letter that was sent home yesterday and our school website is constantly being updated in relation to our curriculum developments so please keep checking the website.



EXTRA LAYERS

Although we are trying to keep windows and doors open when the children are out at breaks to ventilate the rooms and outside doors closed when children are inside as part of minimising the Covid risk, the rooms will be a bit cooler than we are used to. We want the children to feel the benefit of putting their coat on when they go out to play time and not to wear these in class unless absolutely essential. It is therefore best at this time to layer the children up with clothes under their uniform. Children can wear vests, T-shirts, skins, long sleeved tops etc. under their school uniform. January is often very cold, so please can you bear this in mind when the children return in the new year.

STAFFING

Mrs Potts has a new baby daughter – she is getting used to having two children to manage. Mrs Fox and Miss Wheeler will both be starting their maternity leave in the new year. We hope they manage to get some rest before the hard work begins.



ATTENDANCE

I cannot finish a term without having to mention our attendance; our school target is 97% - this was set before we understood the impact of Covid – we are currently at around 93% which compares well with the current national figure of around 90% for primary schools. It is important for children to be in school if possible – too much learning has been lost, and children cannot afford to lose much more.



We are all looking forward to the start of another new year, working together with you to make sure your children enjoy school and make good progress.

During the holidays there are some very important things that you can do to help them succeed. Take the time to listen to your child read and make sure that they are reading every day for at least 15 minutes. This can make an enormous difference to the range of vocabulary your child feels confident to use. There are some great suggestions for how to support your child on the school website. Encourage good social skills and help them to make good choices. All these things will help your child have greater success when they come back in January.

REMINDERS

I would like to thank everyone who has sent their child to school in uniform. It really does make a difference to attitude, and promotes a sense of pride in belonging to Benchill. The Governors of the school do have a school uniform policy that is available for anyone who would like a copy. For the new term, it is important that ALL pupils wear uniform, and their PE Kit, with all items labelled with your child's name.

Please make a real effort to ensure we have a smart start to the new term and that your child is dressed appropriately. Jewellery should not be worn, with the exception of studs, which need to be removed during PE lessons.

HEADTEACHER'S MESSAGE

I know that all the children will have enjoyed their Christmas Party and festive end to the term (including the special messages from Santa). School reopens for children on Monday 4th January 2021 at the normal times. You will have had further information about the return to school in the Information Letter sent home yesterday.

All that remains for me to do is to say a great big "thank you" to all of you for your continued support.

May all of you have a "Merry Christmas," and a peaceful and joyous time with your families – in a safe way, of course.

Merry Christmas

Mrs Eken
Headteacher

