



## **Headteachers Newsletter Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you have all had a lovely Easter break and enjoyed the easing of restrictions and being able to see family and friends again outside.

Welcoming the children in this morning with the sun shining, it was hard not to feel very optimistic and excited about the term we have ahead. As I walked around the classes, your wonderful children had settled back into their lessons and were working hard to achieve their best. We are committed here at Meon Junior to provide your children with a curriculum that will prepare them well for their next stage of education, as well as give them the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need to act with thought and bravery in their own lives now and in the future.

### **Covid- restrictions and Parent handbook**

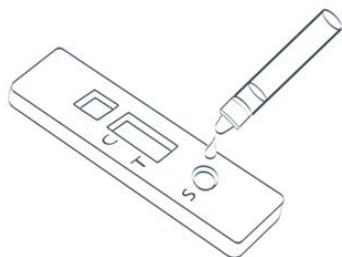
I am pleased to say that the number of new infections in Portsmouth has continued to drop. Only 35 new infections were recorded in Portsmouth last week compared to 85 in the week before the Easter holidays. This is really good news and hopefully as the term progresses, we will see normality begin to return. For now, I am changing very little in our current risk assessment. I want to continue to keep our school community as safe as we can and wait a little longer before removing restrictions. We have been fortunate to not have any positive Covid cases since January, which has meant we have had no disruptions to learning in school.

The only change made this term is that the year 3 and 6 pupils will return to eating in the school hall and we can begin to risk assess and arrange trips and visits for our pupils. Afterschool clubs will resume and each club will form a group for track and trace purposes.

Please continue to wear face coverings when dropping off and collecting your child, particularly when you are on site on the playground. We also ask that you continue to communicate with us by phone and email, and not to use the reception unless it is an emergency. We will not be starting face to face meeting with parents yet, but if you would like to meet with us we can arrange this by phone or video call.

Thank you for your continued support with our safety measures.

### **Lateral Testing for households with school age children**



As you may have seen, members of a household (family bubble) who have school-age children are now able to collect Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs) for adults to test themselves at home on a twice-weekly basis.

Undertaking regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing helps reduce transmission of the virus. Parents and other adults in households with children at nursery, school or college, who do not have symptoms, can now access regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing. This includes childcare and support bubbles.

Tests are fast, easy and completely free. There are different ways for a household, childcare or support bubble to take an asymptomatic test, twice-weekly:

- an employer, if they offer testing to employees;
- Community Testing via asymptomatic testing site;
- by collecting a home test kit from a Collection Point
- by ordering a home test kit online

If you have any queries about the tests, please call 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day from 7am to 11pm. Alternatively, visit <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests> for details on your nearest pharmacy for collection and how to order.

**Children of nursery and primary school age without symptoms are not being asked to take a test.**

Testing is voluntary, but strongly recommended to all who are eligible. Alongside the vaccine, washing hands, wearing face coverings, and maintaining social distancing, rapid testing plays a vital role in reducing transmission rates. Getting into the habit of regular testing as part of our everyday lives will help us all to play our part and do what we can to protect each other.

### **School day timings**

All gates open at 8:30am and pupils must be in school by 8:50am.

Year 3 and 4 pick up is 3:05pm

Year 5 and 6 pick up is 3:10pm

**It is essential that pupils arrive on time for school and are picked up promptly at the end of the day.**

### **French day – Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

Next Friday (30<sup>th</sup> April) is French day at Meon Junior School. Children will get to spend the day immersed in French culture, exploring the geography, the food and the traditions. In addition, there will be a French school dinner menu, which is based on the Friday menu for week 2 (fried chicken/taco and chips) and the menu is attached. The other daily options such as sandwiches and Jacket potato are also available. The meal can be ordered by your child on the day and the normal meal cost of £2.15 is payable via Parent Pay.

### **Bereavement Support for Pupils**

We are aware that some of our families have experienced bereavement in the recent months. This has not necessarily been for reasons related to Covid. Miss Knight would like to set up a support group where children who have experienced bereavement may wish to receive support from her and share their experiences and support each other. If you feel your child would benefit from this, please follow this [link](#) to complete a referral form. Alternately, please request a call from Miss Knight to discuss it further.

We would like to begin this on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May 3:00-3:30pm and will run it for 6 weeks.

### **School Nurse Referrals**

During the pandemic we have noticed that we have been supporting parents less than normal with their children's physical health. We would normally do this with the support of the school nursing team.

This service is still available and can be accessed by filling in a referral form. Please contact the school office if you require a form.

If you have a concern about your child's physical health (e.g. sleep hygiene, dietary needs, re-occurring illnesses, toileting issues etc.) please contact Miss Knight who will support you with this process.

### **Mental Health Support Team (MHST)**

This is a new service in Portsmouth that are working closely with Primary schools to support them and their families with children's mental health. Your local MHST can offer a wide range of support and play a critical role in supporting the whole school community, young people, their families, and carers around the return to education following COVID.

Recently the team have created a video to support parents with **resilience and anxiety management**.

The Portsmouth MHST recognise the impact that COVID-19 has had on the wellbeing of many. Parents have faced huge pressures and changes over the last year inclusive of home schooling, isolation, and balancing home working.

A [30-minute 'self-help' video](#) on resilience and anxiety management has been created to offer parents support. The video provides general advice and an overview of tools and strategies that might be helpful in supporting your mental wellbeing day-to-day as a parent, teacher or adult.

As a school, we have regular meetings with this team and are able to make referrals for pupils with mild to moderate anxiety. The team will then be able to work with parents to offer guidance and support.

If you feel this service would be of benefit to your child and yourself. Please get in touch with the school and ask to speak to Miss Knight our pastoral lead.

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. I look forward to continuing to work in partnership with you to provide quality education and the support your child needs to thrive in school.

Warm Regards

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sara Paine".

Mrs Sara Paine

Head teacher