



NEWDIGATE CofE INFANT SCHOOL
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16th September 2021

Newsletter 1

Dear Parents,

Together again in our precious place and ready to learn and grow! There has been a palpable sense of joy and peace in our first few weeks here at Newdigate that is no doubt a result of children and staff being blessed with the opportunity to spend time with loved ones over the

**Our value this half-term
is love & compassion.**



**We show love and
compassion for
each other.**

John 15:12

*Love each other as I have
loved you.*

summer holidays. Some have even made it to holiday destinations! Even our new Hedgehogs have quickly settled beautifully and become a part of our family very quickly. Our start of year always begins with things most important to our school ethos. This term we will be revisiting all of our bee rules, including our new rule 'be safe' and our value is **love and compassion.**

This first newsletter is jam packed, apologies for the length but we wanted to provide you all with any information you might need.

Today you will also receive your curriculum letters for the relevant year group that will give you more information about our curriculum. Although we now have a very active 'Welly Wednesday' that includes a MOLES session (Making Outdoor Learning Exciting), please be assured this is not our only physical education. As part of our **PE Pledge (Happy and Healthy in Body and Mind)** we will be providing opportunities to the children to experience a wide range of other physical activities through the week which can be done without a full PE kit. We are committed to keeping children's activity levels as high as possible. We will also be running the Golden Mile as we have done in previous years. Although Mrs Martin is no longer at the school, we have a very experienced group of new teachers who continue to deliver MOLES, and the lovely Mrs Llewellyn is so passionate about outdoor learning that she has offered to take on the mantle and is just awaiting her training dates as most sessions are already fully booked!

Assemblies/Worships

We are continuing to hold daily assemblies for our children including our singing assembly (Monday), values assembly (Tuesday), class worship (Wednesday), 'Busy Bee' assembly (Thursday) to celebrate successes, and Birthday assembly (Friday). For those who haven't experienced this before, parents will be invited to join us in the hall at allocated slots near their child's birthday. Mrs Priestley will lead the birthday celebration focussing on the children's unique qualities; it will be a delight to finally be able to bring parents into our school building. We are also thrilled that we will be visiting St. Peter's Church every fortnight to take part in an assembly led by Reverend Andrew Coe or one of his team. We are also able to gather together for our **Harvest celebration** this year.

Covid Information

We have once again adapted and changed our school risk assessment now that we entered our new phase of the roadmap. Please refer to the letter sent before we started term for more details.

Our 3 main protective measures (hand-washing, respiratory hygiene and cleaning of surfaces) are vital in keeping our school a safe place to be. We will also be ventilating our classrooms and communal spaces.

Please can we ask that parents of any child who is absent from school due to suspected Covid-19 visits the school office to clarify the reason for their return eg a negative PCR test. This is being recorded for the school and teachers will not be able to easily do this as well as teach children. Please be aware that a staff member may ask you to do this before accepting the child back into class. I am sure you will all appreciate that safety is our main priority and we need to follow systems to get it right.

The school office is no longer out of bounds for parents, if you need to see a member of the office team please wait at the doors and buzz if you are not spotted! Please be patient with us as every Thursday and Friday Mrs Moon is lollypopping, so other staff are covering the school office.

School Leadership

You may be aware that the government have recently placed a great emphasis on school collaboration and want to make sure that 'no school stands alone.' As a small village school, we have been mindful of this for many years and have been developing a close relationship with another small village infant school, St. Michael's of Mickleham. This relationship has blossomed and grown

Love & Peace

Trust & Thankfulness

Forgiveness & Hope

and I now spend every Monday there as Executive Head. Since September I have been working alongside the new Head of School, Mrs Cleather, a well respected ex-Newdigate leader. In my absence Mrs Priestley is acting leader (Head of School) here at Newdigate. Together we lead Newdigate School with the support of governors, staff and parents.

We have always had an open-door policy but the pandemic has prevented us from applying this. We are now in the position of once again offering this to our families. Obviously, if you have any concerns regarding learning the class teacher would be your first point of contact. If, however you feel you need a conversation with a school leader Mrs Priestley is available Monday and Friday and I am available Tuesday to Thursday. We are both more than happy to help and will liaise with each other when necessary to pass on information.

School governors are a valuable source of support and challenge to the school and act as 'critical friends' to us. We currently have a number of vacancies on our governing body, that are not parent governor positions, so if you know of anybody that would be able to offer their services please do get in touch with us to discuss the possibility.

ELSA

The children know that we have an **ELSA (Emotional Literacy Assistant)**, Mrs Holt-Miller, in our school who can help them if they are finding it hard to manage strong feelings and emotions which are becoming a barrier to learning. Please let us know if you feel it would be beneficial for your child to be referred to work with her. We are finding that the demands for this role have grown greatly in the last year so please be aware that we may need to allocate limited sessions or place your child on a waiting list as we prioritise those in need.

Marvellous Me

Please can we ask that you sign up to our new app ASAP if you haven't already done so. We are chomping at the bit to get information to as many parents as we can about the children's achievements and marvellous moments as well as information about our school day and learning. Please let us know how useful this is once we are underway, our aim is to improve the way we communicate and get relevant information to you sooner.

Macmillan Coffee Morning 24th September 2021

We have supported this charity for many years and hope to do the same again this year. We are looking for a team of parents to help us run an outside event after school next Friday as well as volunteers to bake cakes and bring them into school on the day. Please can you let Mrs Priestley know if you are able to support us.



16th October 2021, 10-12

It has been a while since we have been able to do this, but our outdoor environment is in need of some TLC. This is a chance for families to come together and have fun at the same time. Come dressed for muddy work and if you are able to bring gardening tools (put your name on them!) and gloves with you that would be a great help. Children of all ages are always welcome. We will be stopping for a well-earned cuppa/hot chocolate and a slice of cake midway through the morning.

Open mornings

This year we will be holding our open afternoons on our INSET day and the following day so we can make sure our prospective parents are able to see the school building as well as the outside area. Please can you promote the school and tell anybody looking for places about us; you are our best marketing tool!

Remember to recommend us to your friends and families!

Open Morning – Friday 22nd October 2021 (10 a.m.-12)

Open Morning – Saturday 23rd October 2021 (10 a.m.-12)

At the end of the term we sent out a parent questionnaire to all of our families. We had 35 responses and I have summarised them below. Overall, they were very positive and supportive, but we did have a few responses that highlighted areas for us to improve. Our main area for improvement is communication, including communication of children's learning. We know that the last year had a massive effect on our ability to communicate clearly and in a timely manner and we are keen to work towards this immediately.

100% of parents would recommend the school to another parent.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My child enjoys school.	74%	26%	-	-	-
My child feels safe at school.	83%	17%	-	-	-
The school community reflects the Christian faith in its day to day life.	54%	43%	3%	-	-
The school meets the academic needs of my child.	46%	37%	14%	3%	-

The school is proactive in providing extended services for my child.	40%	31%	23%	6%	-
The school encourages a healthy life-style.	60%	34%	3%	3%	-
My child does well.	57%	43%	-	-	-
The school provides a good foundation for the future.	60%	40%	-	-	-
The school staff are welcoming and approachable.	74%	23%	3%	-	-
The school lets me know how my child is doing.	31%	37%	14%	14%	3%
The school make sure its pupils are well behaved.	60%	31%	9%	-	-
My child has been bullied and the school dealt with it quickly and effectively.	78% not bullied 6%	6%	9%	3%	-
Communication is good.	40%	23%	20%	11%	6%

You also gave us 3 words to describe our school and we have made a wordle to capture those words:



To start that process this year we have opted for face to face **parent consultations** (see dates list) so that parents can receive information in a more intimate manner. If this does not suit you and you would prefer a remote session please speak to your child’s teacher and they will organise this for you.

We will also be holding a **‘Meet the Teacher-Information about learning and the curriculum’** on Wednesday 6th October from 6-7. We know that this can be difficult for parents to make arrangements to attend meetings after school, but we would urge you to put this in your diary. Getting the very best outcomes for your child depends upon us working together to overcome any learning gaps or problems they have. We will be holding separate year group sessions, but will also set-up a range of learning

resources and curriculum displays that we hope will provide you with more information. Join us for drinks and nibbles and a chance to find out about what is happening in your child’s classroom.

We are attaching a **dates list** for the term along with INSET dates for the year. I mentioned in my summer newsletter that we have been asked by the local authority to allocate an additional holiday day for the **Queen’s Platinum Jubilee** (as the extra bank holiday falls in a school holiday). We know that many community and voluntary controlled schools have chosen 22nd October 2021 as their additional day, but the governors have decided to take ours at the end of the summer term on 21st July 2022. This means our last day of term will be Wednesday 20th July.

Our breakfast and after school clubs will continue to run as usual this term. They are now often full so we would urge you to book early to avoid disappointment. You can book these through your Parentmail App – see <https://vimeo.com/380507523> for how to do this.

Although our other autumn after school clubs (football and gardening clubs) are currently full, we will be sending out information about a spring sports club that will be open to all children after the half-term.

Stay well and safe.

Paula Bliss

DATES – AUTUMN TERM 2021

Term dates – Wednesday 1st September – Friday, 17th December

Half term dates – Monday, 25 October – Friday, 29th October

INSET days – Wednesday 1 Sept, 22nd October, 4 January

Diary Dates for Autumn Term

01.09.21	INSET Day
02.09.21	Back to school
24.09.21	Macmillan Coffee afternoon – cake sale (after school)
04.10.21 – 08.10.21	Feeling Good Week
05.10.21	#Hello Yellow Day – Supporting Young Minds
06.10.21	Meet the Teachers – information about learning and the curriculum – 6-7pm
11.10.21	FONS AGM 7.30pm – school hall
16.10.21	Out and About Morning – 10am – 12noon.
19.10.21	School Photos - Individuals
21.10.21	Harvest Festival @ 2pm – School
22.10.21	Open Mornings 10-12 (INSET DAY)
23.10.21	Open Mornings 10-12
10.11.21	Meet the Teacher – 3.30 -6pm
17.11.21	Meet the Teacher – 5.30 – 8pm
26.11.21	Hoops Up
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Christmas Fair</i>
07.12.21	Christmas Performance – 10am
08.12.21	Christmas Performance – 10am
10.12.21	Christmas Jumper Day – School date.
15.12.21	Pied Piper Theatre company
16.12.21	Christingle @ 6pm -St Peters Church
17.12.21	Last day of term – Break up at 2pm

DATES – SPRING TERM 2020

Term dates – Tuesday 4 January 2021 – Friday 1 April 2021

Half term dates – Monday 14 – Friday 18 February 2021

INSET Day – 21st February 2021

Diary Dates for Spring Term

04.01.22	INSET Day
05.01.22	Back to School
11.02.22	Break up for half term
21.02.22	Inset Day
22.02.22	Back to School
01.04.22	Last Day of Term – Break up at 2pm
19.04.22	Back to School – Summer Term

