

NEWSLINE

January 2021
Issue 1



North Primary School and Nursery

A Town Centre School with a Strong Community Ethos
Celebrated our 126th anniversary on 12th November. Visit www.northschoolcxxv.com

Dear Parents and Carers,
Happy New Year.

As Del Boy said in *Only Fools and Horses*, "It's déjà vu all over again!" Which is kind of true, but there are differences. The weather, for starters. Lockdown 1 saw the best spring weather on record, only 3 summers have been hotter!

I have kept the second page of this January Issue#1 exactly as it was in March. I think it is interesting to look back on where we were just over nine months ago. It feels longer. That was March issue#8. Of course, we are not entering the world of the unknown. You have lived through it and that will mean you have started lockdown 3 aware of what lies ahead.

Page 1 of March issue#8 was presented as a two page diary—day 3 and day 4 of lockdown. On day 3, it reported, there were 8 children in school. On day 4 there were 12. There were three mixed age bubbles, which grew and were capped at 10. This time we are running 7 age group bubbles, capped at 12.

So, we are offering places for many more children than in Lockdown 1. And unfortunately the government is guilty of mixed messages, made more confusing by their changing nature, For example the expectations on our Nursery offer changed twice last week. What has not changed—and has actually worsened over the past few days is the transmission rate and the death rate in the community. This is why I wrote in a parentmail on January 6th (which accompanied Claire Kershaw's letter): "To offer places to every child meeting the criteria would make a nonsense of the purpose of the lockdown. In applying my duty of care to children and staff in school I am limiting bubble sizes to 12 - one bubble per year group. Thank you to those of you who are making sacrifices, keeping your children at home and juggling home learning and work. It is really appreciated."

I offer you all my very best wishes during Lockdown 3.

Alan Garnett

Home Learning

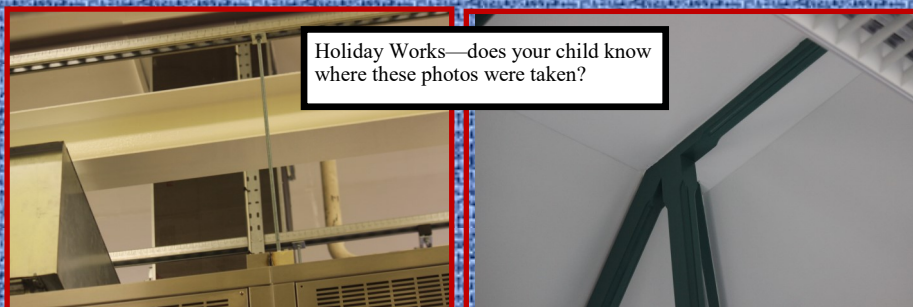
By now, your children will have had work set via Tapestry or See-Saw. You also have the first weekly year group newsletter. These are brilliant. They are full of useful information,



links and tips, and also showcase some superb home learning like the lovely photo of the little boy in Nursery practising holding his pencil grip—can you guess what his name is? And Asiya's (Y5) New Year's Eve cake, pictured below.

The government has advised parents to report schools to Ofsted if they are unhappy with the home learning offer. Not helpful and apparently Ofsted were caught by surprise by this announcement. If you are unhappy please inform us directly first—then we can try to sort things out. Quickly. This also happens to be how schools' complaints policies are supposed to work. Ofsted received 500 emails within two days, but they were not the emails Gavin Williamson was encouraging., the opposite in fact. The NSA has circulated information about this via their facebook page.

We will be reintroducing the home learner of the week award—one per year group every week. Teachers will have sent you communications via Parentmail and staff will have made their first "Keeping in Touch" phone calls. These were well received by parents and staff last time. These will be held fortnightly. But, the beauty of Tapestry and SeeSaw is its interactivity—children and parents can post comments. The last thing we want you to do is struggle with home learning—please contact us if you need help.



Holiday Works—does your child know where these photos were taken?

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Mrs. Shuter, Mrs Sancasani and Mrs. Pettit have been working at speed to organise a food hamper service for all families eligible for free school meals (not infants receiving universal FSMs). If you think you qualify for free school meals please enquire via the school office. We also hold foodbank vouchers for families in need. Please email.

“Everyone is feeling extremely anxious and concerned about the weeks ahead and making plans to fill your children’s time. You may have high hopes for hours of learning including online activities, science experiments and book reviews. In many ways it is good to have a timetable to maintain normality, but these are not normal times. Children are confused, anxious and upset even though some may initially celebrate no school! Their reality is now not seeing their friends or running off energy at playtime or sharing stories of their weekend. A large proportion of your time will be spent comforting and reassuring your children. You can bake, play board games, race around the garden, learn to juggle, explore new topics on the internet or even just snuggle under a blanket on the sofa watching films. If I can leave you with a thought before the home schooling adventure begins, it is that the happiness and security of your children is far more important than their academic progress. The weeks ahead will have an impact on all of us, aim to do something uplifting which brings optimism so that your children will remember positive family time rather than fear and anxiety.”

Keeping in touch whilst the school is “closed”.

Whilst your children are not at school please remember the following:

Email or ring the school if you need advice on parenting. We will endeavour to respond as soon as we can.

In a crisis ring:

NSPCC 0808 800 5000
Family Operations Hub 0345 603 7627

If you have money/housing worries contact Colchester Borough Council 01206 282222.

If you need help with food contact the school to get a virtual foodbank voucher.

School Nurse. Tracy MacDougall, the school nurse will be keeping in touch with some families.

Family Support Worker, Amanda Rowe, will no longer be doing home visits but will support families over the phone.

Dear Families of North,
Be creative!
If you have any instrument - play it,
Write a song - sing it,
It doesn't matter if you think you are able to or not.
Remember this:
“When you pick up that instrument,
When you make up that song,
When you then get your family to sing along, others listen whenever they can, You will have created a thing that is new, And the world will be happier, all because of you.”
I look forward to hearing all the beautiful music that I know you can all create when we are all back together again.
Stay Safe

Mr Bosch

Achieve a Balance

The BBC are bringing out lots of new educational programmes for children.

The National Literacy Trust are putting ideas for families on their website

Year 6s are writing and illustrating postcards to send to people who live alone in retirement and care homes. There are a number websites that are promoting this now.

Mix up home learning with fun things to do together

EXERCISE & GET LOTS OF FRESH AIR

BAKE

LEARN A NEW SKILL TOGETHER—
YOUTUBE IS GREAT FOR DIY GUIDES

Get the children to watch their favourite DVD films with the sound down and subtitles on and get them to read in the voice of the characters!

YOGA

The children in school.

Their teacher, Naomi

could teach you. Many do it

Davies, will also put

COMING SOON

TERM DATES

Mon 7th September 2020

First day of new school year

Mon 7th September 2020

Year 6 Residential to Weymouth

GARDENING