

Leeming RAF Primary School

Newsletter



July 2021

Dear All,

Well, I can't quite believe that we've made it to the end of this year. It's been a long, and, frankly, a hard one. At this time last year, after the first lockdown, I think we all hoped that 2020-21 would be 'normal'; it's certainly been anything but that. None of us could have anticipated the complexities of the year we've faced – isolation, bubbles, testing, lockdown 2.0 – the list goes on.

I don't mention this in order to dwell on the negatives. Far from it. Rather, this forms the backdrop, the context, for a myriad of success stories and triumphs for so many in our school community. I must start with the children. The resilience, adaptability, determination, patience and positivity that they have shown has been inspiring. They have taken everything thrown at them and have managed to thrive in the midst of it all. That's not to say that there haven't been struggles and issues – we know that some children have found the disruption of this year harder than others, but even those pupils have come through the challenges and we are so proud of them. I think we have seen something of the pupils' resilient, joyful spirit in the Sports Days over the last few weeks – it was lovely to see the children's excitement as they 'performed' for you – sprinting, throwing, leaping and bouncing back after such a hard few months.

I also wish to commend and celebrate the fantastic staff team that we have here at Leeming. Again, this year has demonstrated this in so many ways. The teachers and support staff have risen to new challenges, worked in new ways and given their all throughout. There have been so many instances throughout this year of the ways in which the staff have gone above and beyond. As a tiny example of this, were you to walk into the staff room at lunchtime you'd find it deserted. Instead, you'd find the team in their classrooms: cleaning surfaces and resources, or preparing online learning for those who are isolating, or doing video transition calls for pupils joining us who can't look round, or sitting one to one doing pastoral check-ins to help children who are anxious about COVID – the list goes on. As the headteacher, it is a privilege to lead and work alongside such a dedicated group of professionals.

Lastly as I reflect on the past year, I want to say a huge thank you to you, the parents, for the support, flexibility and patience that you have shown this year. We are so aware that you have all faced different challenges – the pressure of home learning, coping with children with additional needs who are struggling with changes, grief, financial concerns, illness, fear for loved ones – so much has been going on. I'm so grateful for the ways in which you have supported children's learning and adapted to all the changes of this year. Thank you also for your commitment to abiding by all the government guidance: many local schools have seen far more bubble closures and disruption than we have, and I think this must be testament to the strong partnership between school and parents in implementing protective measures. As for home-schooling – you did the children proud – even though I know some of you have since told us that you've ruled out ever making the switch to a career in education!

Looking ahead to next year and the summer, I just wanted to share a few details with you:

Testing – the government have asked schools to encourage families to please continue LFD testing over the summer period. You can order tests online. Obviously, there is no need to notify school of positive cases during the holiday period. Any contact tracing should now happen through NHS Track and Trace. In particular, please do test (if you are able) on Monday 6th September in advance of the children's return to school on **7th September**.

Summer Learning Opportunities – we are very aware that children need to have a break over the summer – to play in the woods, build sandcastles, paddle in streams and visit their friends and families. For that reason, we are not setting compulsory homework per se over this period.

However, we do ask that you please keep reading with your children regularly if at all possible – use Reading Eggs, Mystery Book Packs, flashcards, Library books, home books, comics, letter sounds on fridge magnets – it doesn't matter – just please keep reading. Six weeks is a long time, and, even for confident readers, if they fall out of the habit, it's hard to pick up where they left off when they return in September; for struggling readers, it's even harder. So please keep reading with the children.

In addition, there are a couple of other home learning options for you:

- Times Tables Rockstars (KS2) – a great way for children to keep their hand in with their mental recall, again, please encourage the pupils to come back to this regularly – even once a week for a short while will do them the world of good.
- Oak Academy – this is the government's free, online classroom created during the last year and full of National Curriculum Subject resources. They have a whole [Summer Learning](#) section (click the link) and you'll find loads of great content and video lessons. There is no pressure to engage with this, but if it's a rainy afternoon and the tablet/ laptop is to hand, why not give this a go and help your child with some catch-up for the lost learning from the last 18 months?

And, did I mention, it's really important to please keep reading!?

E-safety – we've had a number of incidents recently of our pupils acting inappropriately online; sometimes even using the school's Teams package for this. We regularly teach e-safety in school, but obviously we cannot 'police' the children's device use out of school. Please do closely oversee any access that your children have to technology and devices; ideally only permitting them to use these when around an adult. With regards to Teams, we recommend that your child's account be 'cloned' and set up on parents' devices too, so that you can monitor any traffic. A reminder that they should not have access to any social media (e.g. Facebook, Snapchat, Tik Tok, WhatsApp etc. until at least 13 years of age (16 years for WhatsApp)).

COVID procedures, Timings and Collection Arrangements – we are operating on the basis that next year we will be 'back to normal' in terms of a number of COVID protocols. This includes the cessation of the use of 'bubbles' and of staggered start, end, break and lunch times. Face coverings will not be required on site.

However, it should be noted that the experience of the last 18 months suggests any of this could change at very short notice. Please therefore check School Ping just before returning in September as all of the information above / below could have to change if Government policy dictates this. We will, of course, notify you of any changes as soon as possible.

Procedures for start and ends of days will be as follows:

Start of Day:

- Ravens / Eagles (Y6/5) – children to line up by wooden gates near EYFS (through double blue gates); these will be opened just after 08:45 – pupils will come round, through playground, straight in, and be ready to be in class for 08:50.
- Kingfishers / Owls (Y4/3) – gather by 'Lost Property' entrance (door closest to office), door opened 08:50.
- Skylarks / Nightingales (Y2/1) – line up at small blue gate, door opened at 08:50
- Bumblebees (YR) – wait at double blue gates in car park; once Y5/6 are in, parents to bring children down the drive and drop off to staff waiting at the wooden gates at 08:50.

End of Day:

- *Bumblebees* will dismiss 5 minutes before other classes. *Bumblebees* parents ONLY collect from outdoor area by EYFS classroom at 3:10pm.
- *All other parents to line up at small blue gate*
 - That gate will be opened just before 3:15pm (once majority of *Bumblebees* parents have vacated)
 - Parents to make their way into playground and wait outside their child's classroom door.
- Classes will dismiss from classroom doors into playground at 3:15pm
 - Please do not use the gazebo in the middle of the playground, as this is reserved for *Jesters'* staff who will gather the children there.

And Finally...

We have had a wonderful football match this morning; Mr. Nuttall's team, Nuttall United, took on Fenn City in a spectacularly tight game, pipping them to the trophy 2-1. Outstanding play by our Y5/6 pupils, Key Stage 2 spectating, and overseen by the watchful eye of Mrs. Nuttall – the referee. However, after an overzealous tackle, the red card was pulled and Mr. Nuttall was sent off; followed shortly by a Fenn foul that saw him benched too...

We shall so miss Mrs. Nuttall's ability to keep us all in line!

Have a wonderful summer, stay safe, and enjoy some special time with your families. Here's to a fantastic 2021-22.

Best regards,



Rob Campbell
Headteacher