



Newsletter

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Dear Parents & Carers

As you will be aware, we have been very busy in school checking on our learning and skills, as well as looking after our wellbeing and addressing any worries, concerns or anxieties that may be occurring. With that in mind, as much of our curriculum as possible, is outside the classroom.

We are still very mindful of the social distancing measures in place, and are continuing with our Covid Safety Plan as advised by the DfE, and so I would remind all adults and children over the age of 11 years that a face mask/covering should be worn at all times whilst on the school premises. Although some rules are at last relaxing – and we are keeping our fingers crossed that they continue to do so, due to the numbers of people on our playgrounds at one time, we still need to adhere to all the rules we have in place at this time. Our school has been very fortunate in that we have not experienced any covid illness within the school, and we would love to be able to make it to the summer break in the same way.

As soon as we are able to adjust any of our covid restrictions, we will of course advise you, but in the meantime, please observe social distancing, do not try to converse with the teachers on the doors, (please use the class email addresses) and leave the school premises as soon as you have dropped or collected your child(ren).

Parents' Evening

In school we have been very busy and the new system for Parents' Evening seems to be a great success! Everyone has been offered the opportunity to book a ten minute "Zoom" style meeting with their child's teacher, and those where parents are no longer living together have been able to invite the other parent to join the meeting.

A reminder of your appointment will be sent to you, all you have to do is log onto "trimleystmary.schoolcloud.co.uk" in the same manner as you did when booking your appointment, just a few minutes before your chosen slot and the teacher should appear on screen – there is also a link to schoolcloud on the pop-up of the main page of our website. It may be a good idea to log on before your appointment to check that everything is set up and your browser is set up to support the call.

A reminder to book appointments was sent out to those parents who had not yet made an appointment last week and a Parentmail reminder earlier this week. However, if you have not yet booked your appointment you will now need to contact the school main office as the automated system is closed. Although there were sufficient slots for one appointment per child, if an evening has already passed there may not be any free times left with your child's teacher, so please remember, if you do contact us we can only make appointments subject to availability.

Coats & Bags

The weather is at last starting to warm up – we just need it to dry up too! Please remember, however the weather is in the morning it is very changeable. May we please suggest that, regardless of how it is on the way to school, your child still brings a coat/waterproof with them. Where possible, and if not too inclement, children are still going outside if it is misty/drizzly and a coat is required for this. It may also be a good idea to send a sunhat with your child in case the weather predictions are correct and the sun joins us too.

Please remember that children should bring in everything with them that they need for the day – coat, hat, water bottle, packed lunch (if required) and homework book/reading diary. Children do not need to

bring any other items into school. Also, children do not need large rucksacks – small bags or the school logoed bookbag are ideal as they are kept in small lockers or coat pegs. Freeing up some of the cloakroom areas will help when trying to get children in/out of the corridors at either end of the day.

Our Action Packed Diary of Events!

As you will see from the attached Diary Dates, we have so much going on – and this takes us right up to the summer holidays. We understand that there have and will be many Parentmail communications, but please keep checking them as there are many varied events and trips taking place with different dress codes, permissions required and timings for being in school.

We are trying to send the information out to parents several weeks in advance to help parents/carers with ideas of costs and also to help us manage the catering for those children requiring a packed lunch – especially tricky when there are two or three events on the same day! Every single class is spending a day at the Goslings Farm & Trimley Rural Centre, and those children that have already taken part have really enjoyed the animals and outdoor classroom. We also have trips planned for Foxburrow Farm, Colchester Zoo, a beach visit, Easton Farm Park, Thorpe Woodlands, Jimmy's Farm – let alone the more local visits and events in school!

We are mindful that our Year 6 children will be moving on to new adventures at High School in a few weeks, and we are also busily preparing for children who will be joining us in September in our youngest classes, so please keep checking your Parentmail account.

Absences and Holiday Requests

Please remember that if your child is unwell and unable to attend school, you should inform us by 9:30am (where possible) on the first and subsequent day of absence. You can report the absence by Parentmail or on the dedicated phone message option on our normal school's telephone number. Please DO NOT use Parentmail to advise us of absence due to holidays.

We have started to receive requests for Leave of Absence for holidays, and I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents that, in line with the DfE and Local Authority, leave of absence can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. When we returned back to school in September 2020 to begin our current academic year, the DfE advised that school attendance along with the guidelines for 'unauthorised' absence had returned back to normal. Therefore, despite covid, children are expected to be in school, unless unwell. Therefore, under this guidance and as part of the School's Attendance Policy, please be advised that when a child has six or more sessions (three school days) in an academic year of 'unauthorised absence' a Penalty Notice of £60 per parent, per child, will be issued.

If you are considering taking your child out of school for leave of absence for any reason, please advise in advance of the absence by requesting a Leave of Absence form from the main office. Please be advised that in line with the current checking of isolation requirements on return from destinations, we may ask where the holiday is to be taken.

Children's attendance was not recorded from January until 8th March 2021 as this was the most recent lockdown, however, we are still monitoring attendance and look for 97% as being deemed as "good attendance". The School will monitor attendance where it falls below 95%, and the Education Welfare Officer when it is below 90% as attendance is also part of our Safeguarding Policy. You will be receiving the End of Year report for your child on Friday 9th July, along with details of your child's attendance for the year.

Please be advised that children with medical conditions, for whom we are aware of and working with parents/carers, have their own individual attendance target/monitoring.

Year 6 Production

As you will be aware, we love to put on a performance – EYFS & KS1 at Christmas, years 3 & 4 at Easter with years 5 & 6 rounding off the school year. Sadly, as you will understand, this has not been possible for quite some time.

However, as restrictions are slowly changing and looking forward, we hope that Year 6 pupils will be able to perform a production of "Darwin Rocks" in July. We are keeping the production scale and numbers smaller than usual to allow us to "re-invent" in case there are any changes to the suggested "Road Map" out of covid.

The children have been amazing over the last fourteen months and have missed out on lots of occasions both in and out of school, so the last thing we would want to do at this time is prepare, rehearse and produce fabulous scenery and sets for it all to be cancelled at the last minute. Therefore, we are planning a smaller event, with only Year 6 taking part this year. The idea at this stage is that both classes will perform two afternoons after school and one parent/carer from each family will be invited to one of these performances. We are also looking into the possibility of filming/photographing, but this is all dependant of performance licences and can only happen if **ALL** parents agree to the filming. More information will be coming home soon – along with scripts for rehearsals!

Year 5 Drama Workshops

Although Year 5 will not be taking part in “Darwin Rocks”, they will be taking part in a one day drama workshop!! We have invited a performing arts company to come into school for a day to work with the children so that they can, by the end of the day, perform “Matilda”. Details of which day your child’s class will be taking part in the in-school workshop will follow home after the half term break. Sadly we are not able to allow parents to see them perform their masterpiece, but it does mean that we are expecting great things next summer when, hopefully, we may be able to return a little more to the normal routine.

Sports Day

This is another annual event that we missed last year, so if all goes to plan, we are aiming to give the children a Sports Day of sorts this year.

It will be held over three sessions instead of two, and for the same reasons as for the Year 6 production, it will be slightly scaled down in case plans/removal of restrictions do not take place as suggested. Details will be coming home after the half term break, but at this time we are envisaging each child being able to invite **one** adult to watch them take part in sports day.

I realise that some of you may be disappointed that both parents, aunts, uncles, grans and grandads cannot come onto site this year, but in order to be able to offer the children an event, and to avoid disappointment or contacting families at the last minute asking them to reduce spectators, we have taken the decision to have **one adult in attendance per child/family**.

A Parentmail will be sent out nearer the event on which you will be able to nominate which adult is attending. We have advised you of this now so that parents who no longer live together have plenty of time to agree who will attend. Apologies, as you know in the past we have tried our best to offer the same to both parents, but queries are also raised by parents who are living together as to why some children are able to have both parents, and others not, so we are trying to be fair to everyone.

We hope that everyone will agree the best option at this time to offer the children something, without the risk of disappointment of having to withdraw the event or allowing no spectators, whilst keeping everyone safe and complying with social distancing measures (where possible), which we understand to still be in place.

Should current events change sufficiently for us to be able to open up to more parents/carers at Sports Day, we shall of course consider it, in line with our Risk Assessments and guidance at that time, and advise you as soon as possible.

Details of the proposed Sports Day dates, along with reserve dates should the weather be unkind to us are as below:

Years Group	Sports Day	Reserve Sports Day
EYFS & KS1	Monday 12 th July (am)	Wednesday 14 th July (am)
Years 3 & 4	Tuesday 13 th July (pm)	Thursday 15 th July (pm)
Years 5 & 6	Wednesday 14 th July (pm)	Thursday 15 th July (am)

Please be advised that where a Sports Day is in the morning, we will ask you to leave the school premises after dropping off your child, and then ask you to re-enter the premises at 9:15am via the side gate near the Ecogarden, by the chickens and guinea-pigs. This is to allow older children to come out onto the grounds to set up the events – apologies for any inconvenience caused, but we cannot set up whilst adults remain on the playgrounds.

