

Emmbrook Junior School Newsletter

Friday 5th June 2020

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Letters emailed last week and this week:

- Well Being Wednesday Newsletter
- Entering and Exiting School (Year 6 and Key Hub Club)
- Year 5 Masterclass at The Emmbrook
- Free Interactive Online Lessons
- Letter to Year 5 Parents about returning to school

Hello from Mr. Usher

It's been brilliant to have more children in school this week. I have been really impressed with how returning children have understood and practised social distancing (for the most part). We are continuing to learn how we can safely support children and plan for phasing in further year groups and I would like to thank all the parents for their support in helping us get children on and off the school site as safely as possible. If we can safely phase in further year groups; we plan to stagger the start and finish time for each year group which will hopefully enable us to spread the numbers of people coming onto the site and reducing opportunity for transmission.

A special thank you has to go to all the Emmbrook Junior School staff who are working incredibly hard not only to support the children in our Key Hub Club and our returned Year 6 children but also those still at home while also planning for a phased return of hopefully all children before we break up for the summer holidays.

I'm sure many parents of children not in Year 6 are wondering when their year groups will be returning to school and I can't give any firm timings on this. We are working with limited guidance from the government and so will use what we learn from the return of Year 6, this week, to plan for a phased return of other year groups **if possible**. As much as I would like to, I cannot promise that all children will be able to return to school before the summer holidays.

If it is safe to do so, we will only bring one year group back at a time. Year 6 children have returned for either a morning group or an afternoon group and this the model that we will use for all year groups as they return to school. We are limited by the amount of space we have at school and although the government has said we can have up to 15 pupils per classroom we have assessed that the most we can safely have in a learning space is 10 or 11. These groups of up to 11 are known as bubbles and each bubble is assigned its own learning space and adult to lead it (although because of the number of staff that we have some may need to lead two bubbles). If a child is entitled to a whole day's provision because their parents are key workers these children will be placed across two bubbles. This is not ideal, but it is the best we can do in the current circumstances.

We have pencilled in a **provisional** date of the 15th of June for the return of Year 5. **This may change** but is unlikely to be brought forwards and is subject to approval based upon our risk management plan and an indicative survey will be sent out to all Y5 parents regarding their return to school. Subsequent year groups will only return to school if we establish that it is safe to do so and with the consent of the school's governing board. This gives time for each year group to establish how their groups will be organised and allows the school time to review risk assessments and ensure we are keeping everyone as safe as possible. I know that this will frustrate many parents who are anxious for their children to return to school and it may seem unfair that some children will end up with more time at school than others. There

may also be some parents who are reluctant to send back children However, I am not prepared to put children and staff in danger and will always prioritise safety.

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding. The staff at Emmbrook Junior School would like all the children back as soon as possible and are working very hard to make this happen as safely and as soon as possible.

The Senior Leadership Team are planning the staffing structure for next academic year and I know many parents are keen to find out who will be their child's class teacher. Currently we are not ready to share this with you but as soon as we are able to, we will let you know.

Share your experiences

Families will have been affected in many ways by Covid-19, whether it be by bereavement, changes in jobs or in family circumstances. Tragically, there will be very few communities across the country who will not have lost members due to the coronavirus. Please do let us know if you have been particularly affected so that we can offer appropriate support to your children now and on their return to school.

Key Hub Club

This week, our Key Hub Club numbers have been the highest they have been since school closure. It has been wonderful to see all the children! Please can we ask that if you have booked a place at the Key Hub Club but you later decide that your child will not be attending that day, that you let the school office know by 3pm the day before. In order to organise staffing for the Key Hub Club it is important we have an accurate idea of numbers.

As the number of children at the Key Hub club has increased it is no longer possible for children to access their own class assembly. We simply do not have enough laptops to accommodate this. However, the children will not miss out on the assembly, instead they will join in with the class assembly being run by the Key Hub club teacher. We know it's not quite the same as joining in with their own class but as numbers grow in the hub club capacity becomes more of an issue. Thanks for your understanding on this.

Pupil Report Comments

Before half term, we sent you an email inviting all pupils to complete a pupil comment for their end of year report in which they reflect upon their progress, challenges and successes throughout the year. This is not compulsory, but it is a lovely addition to their school report, especially in years to come when your child might decide to dig out their old reports and re-read them! Please ensure that all pupil comments are emailed to the class teacher (on the sheet provided) by **Monday 8th June**. If you would like us to resend the guidance again, please email Miss Scales on rscales@emmbrook-jun.wokingham.sch.uk

An update from the Year 6 Team

This week, some children returned to the Year 6 for either morning sessions or afternoon sessions. We just wanted to share how proud we are of these children; they returned with smiles on their faces and a positive attitude. It isn't easy being back in and adapting usual practice to adhere to social distancing but they were responsible, independent and considerate. Most of all, it was such a huge pleasure as their teachers to be able to talk, learn, reflect and spend some much needed time together. We know there may be challenges ahead, but we really wanted to say 'Thank You' to all the Year 6 children and parents who have made it such a positive week in such difficult circumstances.

“How was your first week back, Year 6?”

We asked our newly returned Year 6 children to share their experiences of their first week. Here is what they had to say:

“I am glad that I have come back as it has been WONDERFUL!”	“Coming back to school is fun because everyone is comforting.”
“I felt nervous and a bit sick before I came but I shouldn’t have done!”	“It’s been really exciting and calm. I’d rather do three hours at school than three hours at home.”
“I felt shocked on my first day back because I had to wake up at 7:00pm when I normally wake up at 8:00-8:30pm on home-school days and I hadn’t been back to school for ten weeks. But I enjoyed it as I got to see my friends.”	“Coming back to school was really different but it is great to see my teachers and friends. It also gives me a change of scenery. Lessons are fun and creative and it gives me a chance to learn new things.”
“The first few days of school have been great. For the first time in forever, we were finally able to socialise with our friends who we have not seen in ages. It has also been great actually being taught by a teacher and not by a computer or a laptop. I wish the days were longer though. When we are there, we have to make the most of it!” (Beth)	“School has been really weird since we returned. We are in a group of 9 and we are not allowed to share anything. We have our own equipment at our own desks. It has been nice to work in smaller groups although we have done our usual Maths and English. We have also done lots of circle time and games which I have enjoyed.” (Ryan D)
“I have really enjoyed coming back to school because I have got to see all of my friends and teachers again. In the classrooms, we each have our own desk and each desk is 2 metres apart. It has been quite weird as we have to social distance from our friends and cannot stand closer than 2 metres apart. Lessons have been quite fun as we have been doing the lessons that are on Teams. There are lots of fun activities for English. We also do a well-being assembly every day and we watch some Newsround. Being back at school has been AMAZING!” (Olivia F)	“I enjoy working at school much more than working at home. I definitely have more space at school!” (William W.)
	“I am loving being back at school as it’s good seeing my friends and talking to them.” (Ellis F.)

And finally...

“I think that we are doing good with Covid-19. I think that how we are handling the situation is very mature.” (Noah B)

We couldn’t agree more Noah! Well done Year 6!

Home Learning

English, Mathematics and Learning Journey activities will continue to be shared on Teams on a weekly basis. This will also continue for Year 6, so that those children whose parents have chosen not to return them to school at this time still have access to the same learning activities that will take place at school. I realise I may sound like a stuck record with my repeated mantra of ‘do what you can, when you can,’ but this remains the school’s policy. For Years 3-5, teachers will be continuing with weekly Zoom assemblies and drop-ins although the Zoom drop-ins will have a particular learning focus that the teachers will let you know in advance.

Now year 6 have returned to school, they will be holding their class assemblies and drop-ins at school and **not** via Zoom. Teachers will continue to respond to emails although Year 6 may not be able to respond as quickly as they have been due to their classroom commitments. That said all the teachers are

keen to find out what you have been doing at home so if you have any work you would like to share then please do so.

Teachers have also started sharing some additional learning materials on Teams. These are optional but may be useful to those families who need additional activities for their children. You can find these in the Optional Extras folder.

Key Hub Club Creations!

We are very proud of our Key Hub Club children who have made these stunning fairy doors and sculptures of the legendary Green Man.



Have a restful weekend. See some of you next week!