

**Easter :
mini newsletter**

Easter activities



We are planning various Easter activities this week for the children to enjoy, and hopefully it is looking like the weather might be kind to us. Obviously, it will depend on what day your child / children are in school as to which activity they take part in, but we will try to spread them over a few days so that as many children can take part as possible.

Class 1 are having a chocolate themed week and integrating Easter within this theme.



In class 2 older children will be preparing Rumblestar refreshments on Tuesday linked to the book they have finished reading for all of the class to try. We have also finally got hold of a dragon fruit to taste too.

Activities on Wednesday / Thursday will include an egg hunt and making an Easter chocolate.

Children attending on Wednesday or Thursday – please remember your Easter hat for our parade.

Easter hat (or costume) parade: Wednesday and Thursday 3.45pm

We will gather the children together at 3.40pm in the front playground on each of these days. We ask parents to arrive at 3.45pm and either stand in the back half of the playground or on the grass area opposite the village hall adjacent to the path, but well away from the path. We will walk around the front half of the school playground and up the path to the village hall and back again. In this way we can allow enough space for any adults to stand and watch but not be too crowded. So if you would like to arrive a little early to collect your child and watch us do a little parade, please feel free.



We will make sure that children are ready to be dismissed straight after this but would appreciate it if you could wait as usual, and we will make sure a member of staff send your child to you.

Multi sports will still be taking place on Wednesday as usual.

Spring clean

Taking home items

Over the Easter break we will be finishing off the work on the class 2 cloakroom and doing a deep clean in school. We therefore need to make sure that everything goes home out of cloakrooms with children this week (except for their indoor shoes and wellies and any spare clothes labelled in bags that we keep.)

We also have a considerable number of items of clothing that have been left, including wellies, from prior to this year too and which we need to do something with so we can make room outside for other things. We will put out anything we have on Tues, Wed and Thursday in case they belong to anyone who wants them, and after this point we will have to assume that they are unclaimed.

Outdoor improvements and storage

By after Easter, we will have made outside storage space near to the classroom doors for wellies and waterproofs. We have had a fantastic little shed donated which was put this up last weekend and Fay has filled it with pre-school outdoor equipment. We will be making a space in the old outdoor kitchen for class 2 wellies. We have plans to improve the area directly outside of the classroom doors so that this is a space for the children to continue their learning and play outside. By after the holidays, we hope to have a small fence so that there is an area dedicated for pre-school and class 1. Class 2 will be focusing on improving the environment outside the front of their classroom by planting things with Elly. All improvements such as the fence and the shed are being done by volunteers as we obviously have very little money to spend on the building. We're really excited about making this a space we can make better use of.

Items required to take part in our provision and which need to be left in school.

With the number of children we have, and the type of school we are (where we have slipper, wellies, outdoor clothing etc.) we are now having to consider very carefully how we can continue to manage this. When we used to have a smaller number of children but children who came full time, we used a small stock of school waterproofs, but this is no longer something which can work.

We are proud of our curriculum and the opportunities children have at Dame Catherine's. We want this to go from strength to strength and for us to increase opportunities and make things easier to ensure they happen. We therefore need the support of parents to remove a few barriers.

Our priority is using the space for children and we simply do not have the space for children to bring bags full of items for that day including wellies, waterproofs, sunhat, sun cream, spare clothes etc. and for these to be in bags in the cloakroom. We also find that some of these then get left around at the end of the day and we've had a bit of a push at reminding the older children last week to take home additional pairs of shoes, jumpers etc. Our class 2 cloakroom should be our main First Aid area and needs to be clean and tidy. It isn't safe to have wellies left all over the floor in either cloakroom. We certainly don't want any barriers to us having fun with our learning so we are therefore making more space by using outside areas to provide specific storage space for wellies and outdoor waterproofs, which we have planned to be in place for after Easter for all children.

On its own this isn't enough, however. We also need routines which support the children and parents to work with us to ensure that the routines are followed. There is very little which is a new request, and for

the majority, little change, but new families starting all the time and some families having been with us for years, so we hope this provides some clarity.

We don't have a uniform policy but, if we are to carry on making the most of our outdoor space, we will need to provide a 'clothing and equipment' list so that we can make sure that everyone can take part in our activities without 'overloading' the school and staff. You could say that our 'uniform' is a mix of slippers, wellies and waterproofs, which really fit the homely and adventurous nature of our school. We will put full details out after Easter but we thought we ought to give advanced warning of what children will need following Easter, so it gives families the chance to get organised in the holiday. Whilst we appreciate that some children might only attend part time, we need to look after the school as a whole so that it provides space for the children. So, the following will apply whether children attend part time or full time.



Children who are part of our Dame Catherine's community will need the following:

- One pair of slippers / indoor shoes which MUST fit inside the shoe storage compartments provided.
- A pair of shoes to come to school in each day which fit inside the storage compartments so we can keep the floor clear. (We are really sorry but wellies do not fit, so your child will need to come to school in shoes.) For pre-school these are really just to come to school in and go home in.
- One pair of wellies which must be labelled and remain in school for outside learning and play. These will be kept in the outside storage space.
- Outdoor waterproofs. These need to be labelled and left in school. Please hand them to your child's teacher either Tuesday onwards this week or asap after Easter. These will be kept in storage near to the wellies.
- A set of spare clothes (or 2 sets for our very youngest children) in a clear plastic bag labelled. This was put in place in September. We have allocated storage space for these in our cloakrooms. There is therefore no need to send lots of clothes on a daily basis in big school bags as we don't have space for these in our cloakrooms.
- From April to September, a sunhat and sun cream. These should be labelled. The sun cream will be kept in school in a box which is easily accessible to the teacher. The sunhat can fit on their peg with their coat.

This should mean that there is very little, which needs to come to school every day apart from lunch and some books etc. for the older children. This should help the very youngest children to manage their things too.

Thank you for your support with this. Our focus, as ever, is to make sure that the experiences for the children are at the heart of everything. Having the above in place for every single child will make all the difference to the children being able to make the very best of their time here with us.

Adults in school

We have done our best over winter to adapt and spend time with parents outside, but it will be great to have more options over the coming months.

In the meantime, could we remind everyone that we aren't able to have adults inside the building at the moment unless they have made a prior appointment to see a staff member. We need to risk assess any visits and have the space to accommodate any adults and for them to be able to distance. Any adults who

enter the building also have to sign in, as if there is a case of covid, we are legally required to notify the DfE of any person who we believe might have been for more than 1 minute within a metre of that person.

Could we ask that parents remember that our procedure for dropping children off which we shared with parents in mid-October after the initial few weeks transition into school in the autumn. We know we have new children starting in pre-school and school all of the time so thought this was a good time to remind everyone. Parents of pre-school and class 1 to say goodbye to children somewhere outside of the entranceway (ie not inside the gate to the school building as having adults queuing causes a real issue with distancing.) There is a member of staff inside the cloakroom to help any children who need it and a member of staff outside. If your child can't manage to take their belongings inside, then rather than put any other adults at risk, please feel free to leave them on the bench outside for now and if we need to practice helping children to know what to do and how best to manage, Fay will create some games to help them.

We are now asking children in class 2 not go round to their classroom door until they have had their temperature checked at the gate. We have found that this helps us not to miss anyone. We will do our best to get an adult out for just before 8.55am, but if children are a little early we would appreciate them waiting until the staff member is outside before going around the back. If children come outside of these hours, then please ring the doorbell.

We are looking forward to the summer term and being able to increasingly organise opportunities to bring some parents together to share in their children's learning and hopefully even one or two little events to support us in raising funds for the school. When we know a little more about the situation next term, we will try to put a calendar together and be as creative as we can. We all need something to look forward to.

In the meantime, we wish you a very Happy Easter. Our term ends at 4pm on Thursday and we look forward to welcoming everyone back from Tuesday 20th April.

The staff and management team at Dame Catherine's