

# Whitehill Junior School

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Friday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

## Autumn Term Update

I trust this update finds you well and you have all enjoyed the summer break. Whilst the weather hasn't always been as sunny as we would have liked (especially as we have now had our solar panels fitted) I hope you have still been able to spend some quality family time together.

For those families joining Whitehill at the start of the coming term, Friday afternoon is usually the time when I email to inform you that the weekly blog is on the website. This is one of the ways you can keep up to date with what we have been getting up to and what we have planned for the coming week. For today, however, this communication is to inform you of a few of the arrangements at the start of the year.

### Mrs Cornell

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that Mrs Cornell has had her baby. Emelia Elizabeth was born at 5.38pm on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> August. Both mum and daughter are doing well and I am sure you will join me in wishing the Cornell family all the very best. I know the staff are very excited at the prospect of meeting Emelia in the coming weeks.

### A Busy Break

Under the watchful eye of Mr Waluk, our Site Manager, there have been a number of 'projects' being carried out over the course of the last six weeks. From solar panels to new fencing; outdoor seating areas to painting. All ensure the school looks as nice as possible when the pupils return next week.

### Arrangements from Next Week

We look forward to welcoming you back to Whitehill on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September**. The start of a new academic year brings updated guidance from the Department for Education in relation to Covid arrangements. The updates have removed the need for bubbles within school and therefore we will be able to reintroduce more sociable lunchtimes and face to face assemblies, for example. We still need to be sensible and monitor the data very carefully, being ready to reintroduce tighter controls if needed (our Outbreak Management Plan).

From Thursday, pupils should **arrive at school between 8.35am and 8.50am** and proceed straight to their classrooms where they will be welcomed by their class teachers. This is our 'soft start' and allows the opportunity for pupils to catch up with their friends and get settled in a calm and more relaxed way. We will continue to use the external doors to the classrooms for all classes except for Year 5 who should use the pupil entrance in between the two playgrounds.

We are reverting to a **3.15pm finish** for all pupils. Pupils will be dismissed at this time and parents and carers should wait on either playground. The class teachers will follow their classes out to ensure everyone has been collected. Can I ask that if you are allowing your child to walk home alone (or with friends) you send in a note to your child's teacher so they are aware.

We still need to be careful when on the playgrounds before and after school and I would ask you be mindful of social distancing etc.



All arrangements in place are subject to change and are dependent upon updates from the Local Authority, the Department for Education or just decisions from within school where we can see it would benefit the pupils, parents or staff. I will, of course, keep you updated but you may have noticed that the 'quick link' to the Covid Blog has been removed from the home page of our website. It will be reinstated should I feel it necessary and still remains as a menu option under 'Blogs' although will not be updated routinely.

### **A Positive Covid Test?**

From 16<sup>th</sup> August, children under the age of 18 (or double-vaccinated adults) do not need to isolate or miss school if they come into contact with a positive Covid case, even if that is within their household. Instead, they are encouraged to book a PCR test but should continue coming to school as long as they do not have symptoms and their test is negative.

If your child develops Covid symptoms, they should stay at home and book a PCR test (not a LFT). If they develop symptoms at school, you will be contacted and asked to collect your child as soon as possible. If the result of the test is positive then they will need to self-isolate. If it is negative, then they can return to school when they are well enough to do so.

Clearly, should your child be generally unwell, then they should stay at home until they are fit enough to return to school. Communication is going to be vital and so please make sure you report absences to the school office as early as possible.

### **School Lunches**

The majority of you, including our new Year 3 families, have registered with SchoolGrid so that you can select your child's school lunches. If you did not get around to this at the end of the last term, then please do not panic. Mrs Lanni will be contacting you again next week to help you get this sorted. We will make sure any child who wants a school lunch will get one until we all get back into the routine of pre-ordering. If your child has packed lunch, then you do not need to do anything on SchoolGrid.

### **PE Kits**

Although I have not seen all the classes' timetables for the start of term, it would be beneficial for all pupils to have their PE kits in school from the first day of term. Can I also remind our new families that we run an 'indoor shoe policy' at Whitehill and therefore pupils will need to have plimsolls to change into when they arrive at school.

Should you have any questions prior to the start of the term, please do not hesitate in contacting me via email ([consult@whitehill.herts.sch.uk](mailto:consult@whitehill.herts.sch.uk) will be monitored over the coming days) and I will do my best to get back to you in a timely manner.

As we get going, I will update you via updates such as this, via my weekly blog or through twitter. I am aware some of you will have applied to follow our twitter feed but have yet to be accepted. We will get this sorted as soon as possible.

I look forward to seeing you all again next week and finding out what everyone has been getting up to.

Kind regards,

*Steve Mills*

Steve Mills  
Headteacher

