



DELVES LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Delves Lane, Consett, Co Durham, DH8 7ES

Head Teacher: Mrs R A Woods

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6th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

As you will no doubt be aware, on Monday 4th January, the Prime Minister announced a new national lockdown.

Schools are again closed and only allowed to provide childcare for those employed in the Government's critical groups and for the most vulnerable pupils.

We understand that this announcement will have created a lot of stress for many of our families; we are working as quickly as possible to get all our systems up and running, but please bear with us in these early days. Teachers are putting work on Tapestry and via Google classroom as soon as possible.

In order to reduce the spread of infection, if it is at all possible and safe for children to be at home, then they should be. Children of critical workers pupils should only attend school if they absolutely need to.

'Critical workers' includes frontline NHS staff, education staff, emergency services staff, farmers, food retail workers, some vital communications, utilities, public service and financial services staff and vital goods delivery drivers.

If parents think they fall within the critical categories, they should confirm this with their employer - proof of employment and hours of work may be requested by school.

If you think you meet the criteria and are likely to use school's education service because you do not have alternatives then it is important that you let us know as soon as possible by completing the attached form. Please include the following information:

- Name of child(ren)
- Occupation of parents
- Name and details of employers
- Days or half days required
- Lunch arrangements

We are asking all parents and carers to complete this form for week commencing 11th January 2021. You may have already spoken to Mrs Woods or Miss Webb about a place at school NEXT WEEK but this form must be completed to secure a place.

A new form will need to be completed each week, we will send this out via text/email. We will review this on a weekly basis and cannot guarantee that your child will have a place. Forms will need to be completed **We will confirm places by Friday at 12pm every week via text message/email.**

Forms will be sent out every Wednesday and will need to be returned by Thursday at 12pm. Places will be confirmed by Friday at 12pm each week.

The core objective of our school offer will be to help vital services continue to function whilst ensuring the best possible levels of social distancing are maintained. We ask that parents of eligible children observe a responsible usage approach by keeping their children at home when they are not at work, and in the first instance seek support from others, in particular their partners/childcare support bubble.

For example, we would not consider it responsible usage for a child to attend school whilst one of their parents, who is not a critical worker, was at home. The more people our children and staff are exposed to, the greater the likelihood of them becoming infected which may ultimately result in school being unable to continue providing childcare altogether. We are also mindful of the fact that the majority of our staff are also parents. As such, whilst they are working at Delves Lane Primary School, they may need to ask their children's schools to provide childcare for them.

Pupils who do attend school can bring a packed lunch (unless they qualify for free school meals or universal free school meals). Children in Classes 1 to 6 are also eligible for a universal free school packed lunch. If you would like your child to be provided with this, please include this information on the form attached. Pupils will be required to wear school uniform, but this should also include warm, practical layers of clothing, trainers suitable for being outside and wellies. Classroom windows will be open at all times to improve ventilation. The children will be directed to undertake the work that their teacher has set for them on Tapestry or Google Classroom.

Children who are in school will be completing the same work as those who are at home

We will open at 8.30am and close at 3.00pm, Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 1.00pm on Friday each week. Please wait outside the school gates observing social distancing rules; as parents will not be allowed on site. Infant children will be dismissed via the small pedestrian gate and junior children at the main gates.

For parents and carers who work shifts, children can be dropped off at the school gates. Parents must ring the school office for drop off and collection of children.

If your child is offered a place the procedures are outlined below:

Procedures for drop off and collection of children:

- One Parent or Carer from each family will wait outside the main school pedestrian gate to drop off or collect their child from school. Parents & Carers should wear a face covering.
- Please can parents remember to socially distance with their child/children outside the school gates.
- **MORNING drop off-time 8.30am**
- **AFTERNOON collection time from the main gate is 3.00pm (Monday to Thursday)**
- **SCHOOL WILL CLOSE AT 1.00pm on Friday afternoons. Please collect your child at 1pm on Friday each week.**
- Please provide your child with a water bottle.
- Infant children and those who are entitled to a free school meal will have a packed lunch provided by school
- Due to classroom ventilation, please make sure A coat and warm clothing will be required. Children will need suitable outdoor footwear including wellies every day.
- Children will be expected to wear uniform. Please note that children will need WARM clothing because classroom windows will need to be open for ventilation.
- Children are expected to have washed their hands before leaving home and will wash them when they come into school. They will continue to wash them through the school day and before they are collected by Parents/Carers.
- Children are not allowed to bring any toys or other items into school.
- If you need to contact school after you have dropped your child off, this must be by telephone or email.
- Please drop off and collect your child promptly.
- Cars will not be allowed onto the site; the main gates will be locked.
- There will **not** be any Breakfast or After School Club provision available.

Groups or Bubbles

Children will be allocated to the following areas with their familiar teachers and support staff:

Nursery & Reception Children – Nursery & Class 1 Area

Key Stage One Children (Children in Classes 3,4,5,6) – Classes 4 & 5

Lower Key Stage Two (Children in Classes 7,8,9,10) – Classes 7 & 8

Upper Key Stage Two (Children in Classes 11,12,13,14) – Classes 9 & 10

Each bubble/group will have a maximum of 12 children using two classrooms and two members of staff teaching children.

Where equipment is shared, it will be cleaned with anti-bacterial cleaner after each child has used it. Rooms will be ventilated as much as possible and children will have regular access to outdoor learning and breaks.

Social Distancing

Each bubble will have a maximum of 12 children to promote social distancing where possible.

Government guidance states **'We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff all of the time'**.

We will follow the guidance by:

- ✓ **avoiding contact with anyone with COVID -19 symptoms**
- ✓ **frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices**
- ✓ **regular cleaning of settings**
- ✓ **minimising contact and mixing**

It is still important to reduce contact between children and adults as much as possible, and we can achieve that and reduce transmission risk by ensuring children and staff where possible, only mix in a small, consistent group and that small group stays away from other people and groups.

***Please note that if a child or member of staff tests positive for COVID-19, then the bubble will all be sent home.**

We are saddened and frustrated at this turn of events, but understand the necessity for this decision. Please be assured that Delves Lane Primary School staff will do all they can to ensure that we provide the best service possible for the critical worker children in school as well as for the majority of children working at home. Please also be mindful that we are lucky to have such a dedicated team of staff who will strive to do their best for Delves Lane families whilst also grappling with the implications of this further lockdown for their own families.

Most importantly please know that you and your families are all in our thoughts at this difficult time and should you need support we will do all we can to help you – just get in touch.

Thank you to our wider school community, families and pupils for their kindness and understanding and in particular to those parents who are conducting key roles – thank you for all that you do.

Stay safe and take care,

R Woods

Mrs Woods
Headteacher