



Sheerness West Federation
West Minster Primary School
Week Ahead
9th November 2020



Federation Message from Mr Cooper ...

When I wrote to you earlier in the week I explained that we were still awaiting government guidance on how the Prime Minister's announcement on Saturday might impact on schools. This arrived on Wednesday after school, but fortunately with a revised date of Monday 9th November for schools to have implemented this, at least!

For almost everyone, school remains as it was this week, but in asking parents and staff to wear face coverings around school, and in contacting those who are extremely clinically vulnerable we were already acting on the two extra changes to previous guidance.

Here is the most relevant part of the new guidance for your information.

"Being at school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing. Time spent out of school is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. This impact can affect both current levels of education, and children's future ability to learn. It continues to be our aim that all pupils, in all year groups, remain in school full-time.

*The risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school, even for those children with existing health conditions. Most children originally identified as clinically extremely vulnerable no longer need to follow original shielding advice. **We have contacted all those where we think that it might apply already.** Parents of clinically extremely vulnerable children will have received a new letter confirming this advice.*

Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not clinically extremely vulnerable themselves, should still attend education.

Children who are clinically vulnerable or have underlying health conditions but are not clinically extremely vulnerable, should continue to attend school in line with current guidance.

*Schools have the discretion to recommend the use of face coverings for adults on site, for both staff and visitors. **(We are!)** Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings and we expect adults and pupils to be sensitive to their needs too.*

Children and their parents and carers are encouraged to walk or cycle when travelling to and from school where this is possible, and to plan ahead and avoid busy times and routes on public transport."

In summary, whilst the new lockdown has changed many aspects of our lives, school continues very much as normal for all but a handful of children and staff. I will always inform you of any confirmed cases which have any possible impact on the children in school rest assured. Parents, equally, please let us know anything that we need to know regarding any positive test as soon as possible if that does happen.

I think there are 3 things that schools can do at the moment to protect children, staff and families. Keep bubbles as small and as secure as possible, increase the wearing of face coverings amongst adults on the school site, and take the guidance and recommended measures seriously.

Rest assured, we are doing all three better than most other schools, and the children are all really benefiting from their time at school; the smiles on their faces say it all. It is so good for their mental health to be going to school and seeing their classmates, with all the other uncertainty in the world around us.

Let's keep the attendance as strong as it has been this week. Thank you, parents, for your faith and trust in us. And finally, I will say this every week, the staff are just amazing. Thank you all. Mr Cooper

- **Applying for a Primary School place**

If you, or maybe someone you know, has a child due to start school in September 2021 (whose date of birth falls between 1st September 2016 and 31st August 2017) you can now apply for a place at West Minster School via the link www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions. Applications will close on 15th January.

We now have a virtual tour available on our website on the home page www.west-minster.kent.sch.uk/ to show you our lovely school so that new parents do not miss out on their 'Open Day' experience. Please spread the word, thank you!

Message from Miss Brewer ...

Welcome everyone back to the first week of term. Again I find myself saying that this is an extraordinary time, as now we are all having to deal with the national lock down. However the children have returned and are working really hard alongside the teachers and teaching assistants.

I would like to thank you for your patience and understanding through these challenging times. Especially when we have to change things very quickly due to government guidelines. Wearing masks and using the one way system is all part of this and again I would thank you for supporting this as it keeps you and the children safe. Have a good weekend and I look forward to seeing you and the children on Monday.

Please ensure your child has warm clothing for PE and a coat each day as we will take every opportunity we can to get outside, even if it's cold. We are also continuing to keep the classes heated but well ventilated, so if they feel the cold and want to wear an extra layer (eg: vest or extra t-shirt under their uniform) to keep them warm, then that is fine too, they can always take jumpers/fleeces off if they get too warm!

Message for the children from Miss Ovenden ...

Welcome back! We have certainly hit the ground running with lots of lovely working going on in all the classrooms.

In the Reception classes you have been looking at fireworks, the different colours of them and making pictures with them. In Year 1 and Year 2 you have started your new topic of toys. This week you have been looking at books that feature different toys and have some toys from the past in your classrooms. In Year 3 and Year 4 you have been looking at writing instructions and the words that need to be used. In Year 5 and Year 6 you have been looking at Sherlock Holmes and The Missing Blue Carbuncle; this sounds like a really interesting story. In the Ivy Centre they have been looking at exploring volcanoes; I hope they were not too messy!

Have a lovely weekend.

Well done to Bluebell and Poppy their attendance of 94% this week! (Friday – Thursday)

- **West Minster Primary School Website** <http://www.west-minster.kent.sch.uk/>

Our school website is a valuable source of information for parents, we are currently working to make it even more accessible and helpful.

- **West Minster Facebook Page** <https://www.facebook.com/WestMinsterPrimarySchool/>

Our Facebook page is updated with any current information.

- **ClassDojo** <https://www.classdojo.com/invite/?s=5e835485d302677528890d7e>

Follow this link to get signed up to your child's page. You can have more than one adult to the child. ClassDojo allows you to have contact with the class teacher.

- **Safe Internet Use**

Please click on the link for information from our website regarding online safety - <http://www.west-minster.kent.sch.uk/parents/e-safety/>

This week's letters/emails sent and on our website, Facebook page and Class Dojo were:

- Poppy Appeal (Published 03.05.20)
- Executive Head Update (Published 02.05.20)

Future Dates

11.11.20 – Wear red as an awareness day for Remembrance

13.11.20 - Wear spots as an awareness day for Children in Need.

Attendance:

Please remember if your child is not attending school you must either phone the school office or text them on 07874873901 with the reason why they are not in.

Important information – Due to the lockdown children should only be collected from school by a member of their own household. The only exceptions to this are if a single parent is in a support bubble with ONE other person or if childcare is being provided.