

Cheselbourne Village School
Cheselbourne
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 7NT



office@cheselbourne.dorset.sch.uk



01258 837306



22 May 2020

Phase One Reopening – information for parents of children in Year 2, 3 and 4

Dear Parents

I hope you have had a good week, it has certainly been a busy one for us in school. Since the announcement of a potential reopening of school from 1st June, staff and governors have been working to try to prepare for this. There has been a lot of information and guidance on doing this and we have been preparing ourselves, and the school for this possibility. All of which is dependent on if the government is satisfied that it has reached its five tests to be able to move into the next phase of moving out of lockdown.

We realise that all preparation so far has been for Phase One and meaning only children from Pre-school, Reception and Year 1 returning in the first instance. However we still feel it is important to prepare all children for a return to school. I have included below some useful reading which I have been passed on by a fellow headteacher. Please take from it anything you feel would be helpful in discussing everything with your child(ren).

After half term for children in years 2, 3 and 4 we will continue to set our School at Home work, all of which is going to be overseen by Mrs Collett. To offer further support for this, and to help begin preparing these year groups for a return to school in the next phase of reopening, she will also be hosting weekly Zoom meetings for each of these year groups. Timings for these meetings are yet to be confirmed but will take place in the first half of the week and will be a chance to go through the school at home work that has been set on Monday morning. Mrs Collett will be able to answer any questions about the work or offer 'live' help for anything children are stuck on. We hope your child will be able to join her for these meetings and that they are useful. We are going to wait to gauge interest but we are also considering offering a second review meeting towards the end of the week also.

Next week is half term and we will be taking this as a half term break to give all staff, parents and children a break from school at home work. However, should you need to contact me for any reason, I will still be available by email so please don't hesitate to get in touch.

I hope you all enjoy a good week ahead!

Kind regards,

Mary See

Mary See, Headteacher, Cheselbourne Village School



Cheselbourne Village School
Cheselbourne
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 7NT



office@cheselbourne.dorset.sch.uk



01258 837306



Finding Hope In The Familiar

This situation is new to all of us. In any transition, it's important to start with the familiar. What is it that we do know? As parents, you may have learnt a lot about your child over the last few weeks. It may be helpful to write your thoughts down and share them with people in school. Asking the children about their experiences in lockdown is useful as well.

The Importance of a Transition Period

We don't expect children to arrive on Day 1 and hit the ground running. School will be different. For children who struggle with change, it will be difficult. We will not be able to simply pick up where we left off.

Considering The Child's Lockdown Experience

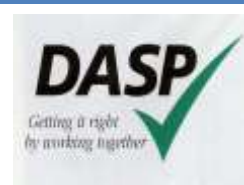
Understanding and sharing your child's experiences during lockdown will help the staff transition your child back into school. For example, some children may not have done any school work at home because of various reasons; home is home and school is school and they do not meet; some children, used to additional classroom support may have found it overwhelming and too stressful; some children will have enjoyed setting their own agenda and having more freedom. The connection between families and school, over the next weeks, is a great opportunity to strengthen co-production going forwards.

Communication Issues

Being at home and being at school is very different in terms of communication. Some children may have experienced different levels of communication within their own immediate family in a very quiet environment. Some children will have experienced communicating with family and friends in different ways through technology. Returning to a communication rich environment, such as school, will be another adjustment. There will be more adults and children around and it will be noisier. This may be more difficult for some than others. School will be very aware of this and again will do everything possible to support.

Social Interaction

From the start to the end of the day, the experience of getting involved again, will be another adjustment. Social interaction is different for every child and they deal with it in many different and sometimes complex ways. Phased, smaller classes may benefit this. Some children will come back and pick up friendships where they left off. For others, they may be worrying about forgetting how to interact. Some children will want to talk about their experiences amongst themselves during play. We need to be careful how some children fit into this as their experiences may have been different and sharing this information may be overwhelming or upsetting for some. As a school, we will be setting expectations of respecting each other through our usual values. There will be some social challenges on return and we want to reassure you that we are aware of this and are planning accordingly with ways to support the children.



Cheselbourne Village School
Cheselbourne
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 7NT



office@cheselbourne.dorset.sch.uk



01258 837306



Sensory Needs

We are also aware that some children will have experienced a significant shift within their sensory systems. They might be on heightened alert – more sensitive to noise, crowds, smells etc. Coming back to school for these children will be intense and overwhelming. They may have coped with their sensory needs at home through using headphones for online learning, having quiet space, lots of breaks and freedom. Others may have been upset by changes in routine and not being able to visit special places. It would be very useful for parents to share such information with the school to help us with our understanding. We are very mindful that sensory issues will be a big issue for some children.

Independence and Adapting to Change

Children can find it very difficult to process change. When school ended it was very sudden and it was a major change to life as we knew it. When we go back, it will be a further change and while some things will be familiar, there will be new ways of doing things that we will need to embed into our school day. We will communicate changes to routine and classrooms as early as possible prior to return so that your child has time to become familiar with the unfamiliar. We will use our web site (under the key information tab) and our Facebook page to post photos of the school, starting with what has stayed the same and introduce changes. We will give time to the children in the first week to practise the changes.

Emotional Support

Children may have experienced many emotions – joy of being at home, not getting up in the morning and putting uniform on or worrying about the virus. Children are vastly different in how they process their emotions. Some might find it difficult to recognise their emotions and what they are connected to which can cause distress. Some children feel emotion in a very big way and are hyper sensitive to the emotions around them so with all the emotion currently around, these children may have really struggled. Fear may also still be a factor for some time. We are very aware of the above and will be giving lots of time to allow children to communicate their emotions by listening, talking and giving them time to process what is happening.

