

Dear Parents and Carers

I can't believe another two weeks have passed— time certainly does fly when you are having fun. The children have well and truly settled in to the new routine and are working really hard. We have now reached the end of week 4 of our recovery timetable and all children from Y2 – Y6 have completed assessments which have been analysed so that their teachers can identify gaps in their learning. Reception and Y1 assessments have been mainly done through observations. Intervention groups are now up and running and those gaps are already being well and truly plugged. We are still very mindful of the fact that the children need time to talk about what is happening and have invested in a whole school PSHE scheme that they are all really enjoying to ensure we are catering for the emotional needs of the children during these strange times.



I hope that these two symbols will be familiar to you. Children from Y1-Y6 now have an individual log in for Spelling Shed and Y2-Y6 also still have times Tables Rock Stars. The children have taken to Spelling Shed like a duck to water. I have used this in a previous school and saw it have a huge impact on children's spelling. It can be accessed on a computer, tablet or phone. Just be aware that the children need to log in carefully to ensure they get the spellings that have been set for them specifically by their teacher. If your child is off school waiting for a test result for themselves or a family member these two activities are a perfect start to the day (as long as they are well enough). Teachers will also send work on Seesaw that matches as far as possible the learning that is happening in their class for that day.

Miss Griffiths will be sending out class codes for those classes that have not yet set them up so please look out for these. This will mean that you will be able to send work back to the teacher so they can monitor if work is being completed more easily, give feedback and assess the progress that your child is making. We do have a contingency plan in place if a whole bubble has to self-isolate and will share that if or when it becomes necessary. If you need help with this or are struggling with online access, please contact us so we can help find a solution.



### Free School Meals

We understand that there have been many challenges to cope with since March and for some, one of these may be financial, for instance if you have been made redundant or are self employed and been unable to work. If you think your child may be eligible for free school meals, you can apply (completely confidentially) online. Even if your child in Reception, Y1 or Y2 and receives universal free school meals because of their age, it is still worth you applying. As a school we receive extra funding (Pupil Premium) for children receiving free schools meals which is used, for example, to fund trips, music lessons and after school clubs so you do not have to pay for these. Please be assured that no-one will know which children are receiving free school meals and your child will not be labelled or treated any differently. Please contact Mrs Pick or Mrs Harvey for more information who will deal with this sensitively and confidentially.



I would like to say a special thankyou this week to Mrs Pick and Mrs Harvey who are, as always, working tirelessly in the office and I am sure you all appreciate their calm and reassuring voice at the end of the phone when you need advice about whether to send your child to school or get a test. I would also like to say a huge thankyou to Mrs Coxon, Mr Eyre and Mr Bruno who are doing a fantastic job of keeping the schools clean and safe for us all.

### Birthday Treats

We have had a few queries about whether children can bring in treats to give out on their birthday. For safety reasons we cannot give out anything that is homemade. We need any cakes or sweets to be in individual wrappers so that can be spread out on a cleaned table for each child to pick up for themselves.

## Picture News

In our commitment to develop children's critical literacy skills we have teamed up with [Picture News](#) to help develop their understanding and appreciation of the news. Having age-appropriate conversations with your child about the news keeps them interested and informed about what's happening in the world. By having regular conversations about the news, you are able to share a whole range of topics and together make more sense of events, issues and stories. Children will be discussing a current issue with their teacher each week as part of our assembly timetable and children have already engaged in a lot of thought provoking and meaningful conversations around current issues. Our children never cease to amaze me and their honesty and resilience shines through during these sessions. Each week there is a [Picture News At Home](#) that I will ask teachers to put on Seesaw if you would like to continue these discussions. I have put this week's at the bottom of this letter. There are no rules or script to follow but you might want to watch, listen, read and discuss the news selectively. Some significant news stories can be frightening, and you will need to consider what your child can cope with and whether they are developmentally ready to understand certain events. For example, you might decide to listen to the news rather than watch it as there may be images they might find upsetting. Talking about the major headlines of the day and current affairs is important so that children grow up as global citizens but it's important too to share a variety of fun and exciting news stories from the worlds of sport, entertainment, music, science, etc as well as local news closer to home.

Here are some quick tips:

- **Initiate** discussions about the news using the Picture News resources.
- **Read and watch** some news stories together from different sources.
- **Find out** what your child knows about the news and explore their understanding.
- **Listen** to what your child says and value their opinions.
- **Explain** simply and in a way that makes sense to them.
- **Promote** a habit of enquiry and make asking questions your child's default setting.
- **Help** your child to spot fake news and how-to fact-check.
- **Develop** a news habit by accessing the news daily.
- **Defuse** bad news and offer reassurance.
- **Protect** your child from distressing and disturbing news.
- **Avoid** repeated viewings of the same news event.
- **Monitor** your child's exposure to the news.



Discussing the news of the day doesn't have to be formal but can be done naturally and casually in everyday moments such as on the way to school or preparing a meal. The important thing is to keep the conversation going about the news and make it a feature of your daily lives. By working together, we can help children become critical consumers of the news so that they are 'news savvy', articulate and confident citizens.

### **To the Children....**

**We all continue to be super proud of you all and I feel really lucky to be your Headteacher. I know that school must still feel a bit weird sometimes but you are coping brilliantly. When Miss Griffiths and I spoke to some of you about how you were finding school and how you were settling back in, your responses were overwhelmingly positive which shows your teachers and teaching assistants are doing a great job of making you feel safe. Remember, there are lots of people to talk to if you feel unsure or worried about anything. My favourite part of the week is definitely 9.10am on Mondays when I get to see ALL of you in both schools at the same time during our virtual collective worship (especially now that I have sorted the technology).**

**Have a lovely weekend—I think it is supposed to be sunny again!**

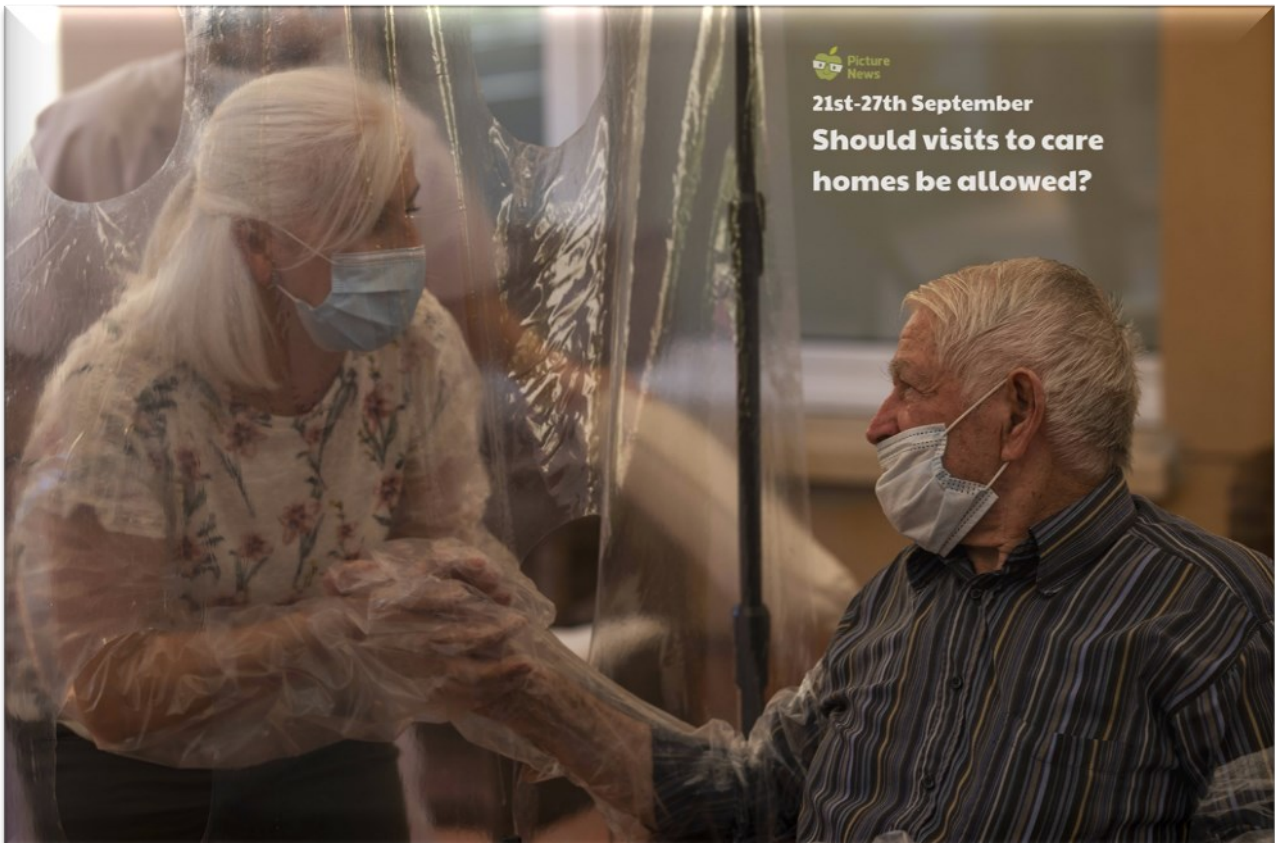




# Picture News

21<sup>st</sup> September 2020

What's going on this week?



A charity is seeking a review of the government guidance on care home visits. John's Campaign says many care homes in England are still refusing regular face-to-face visits, despite changes at the end of July that outlined new guidance for visitors.

*Things to talk about at home...*

Do you have any family or friends who live in a care setting?

Have you ever visited a care home or residential home? If so, what was it like?

Do you know anyone who works in a care home?

Could you find out about what life is like in a care home? Perhaps you could ask family or research online?

*Please note any interesting thoughts or comments here...*

Share your thoughts and read the opinions of others on our discussion board: [www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss](http://www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss)