



## Ponteland Community Primary School

### **Welcome, Parents to Ponteland Community Primary School**

We are committed to working together with you to ensure that your child is happy and successful during their time at school. We know that children learn best when carers and staff work together to encourage and support their learning, and we very much look forward to getting to know you and your child.

Please take the time to read this booklet carefully as it will answer some of the questions you may have and the information it contains is written to help you and your child achieve a successful start at Ponteland Primary School. If you have any further questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact the office.

### **School timetable**

Children will be supervised on the yard from 8.30am. Your child should be on the yard by 8.45am and the children will be brought in by duty staff at this time.

It is very important that your child is on time so they do not miss notices and information, often issued at the start of the day. If your child is late, this will be logged on the school's register and a note will be placed in their diary.

8.45-9.00	Registration
9.00-9.15	Assembly / DEAR
9.15-10.15	Lesson 1
10.15-11.15	Lesson 2
11.15-11.30	Break
11.30-12.30	Lesson 3
12.30-1.20	Lunch
1.20-1.30	Registration
1.30-2.30	Lesson 4
2.30-3.30	Lesson 5

School finishes at 3.30pm and children collect their belongings from their cloakroom and exit via their assigned entrance.

In the past the children walk down onto the yard to the bus park or visitors' car park crossing or along the footpath if they are walking down Callerton Lane. If they are walking up Callerton Lane, they walk along the path at the front of the building and cross the lane at the puffin crossing. Once the Schools and Leisure build has been completed we shall be able to update you.

Please ensure that your child knows how they are getting home and, if they are being collected, who is collecting them and where. This is especially important during their first week. The staff car park is not available for pick up or drop off.

If children being collected are not picked up by 3.50pm duty staff will bring them back into the front of school and their carers contacted.

If your child lives within walking distance then is often a good time for them to become more independent and walk to school. Many children from Ponteland and Darras Hall walk up and down Callerton Lane each day and this also reduces the amount of traffic.

### **School clubs**

Children are informed about clubs for the forthcoming week on Fridays. This information is usually given to Form teachers. Children should make a note of the times of any clubs they wish to attend and organise to be collected from the club by their carer or parent.

We encourage children to become involved in after school clubs and to “give them a go” even if it is a sport or activity they have not done before. We find children make new friends, and often find sports or music activities they excel in, which helps to grow their confidence.

### **Home-school diary**

You will find all of the information you require about the school’s policies and procedures in your child’s diary. Please ensure you have carefully read the sections at the start of the diary and complete details and signatures to show you have read it. It is especially important that we have your emergency contact details at the front of the diary. Please feel free to use the diary to communicate with staff and we will do likewise.

Diaries will be signed by form teachers every week and we ask that parents sign it weekly too. This ensures that any notes will be read and replied to, should children forget to show them to staff or parents.

### **Contacting school**

Please feel free to write about any concerns you may have in your child’s diary. And note if you wish a member of staff to call you. If the information is too sensitive for a note and you do not wish to write in the diary, please call the school office. The office staff will then put a note saying you have called in the member of staff’s pigeon hole. Staff will try and call you as soon as possible. Please note that, due to teaching commitments, this is not always immediately possible but staff will always endeavour to call back on the same day.

### **Uniform and equipment**

It is essential that all of your child’s uniform, PE kit and equipment are named. This makes it easier to identify so your child can find it if it is left in a changing room or classroom and also makes it easier to return it to your child if it does get lost.

### **Attendance**

Each year group runs a weekly attendance competition, showing each form’s attendance and good attendance is celebrated at whole school assemblies. Obviously children cannot help being unwell but it is important that your child is in school for the maximum amount of time. Absence is authorised for music exams, school sporting fixtures and national competitions. Your child will need to have their passport signed (in their diary) by teachers and parents to show they are going to miss lessons.

Please try to make medical and dental appointments outside of schools hours (we understand this is not always possible; just put a note in the diary).

Holidays should be taken during school holidays. The demands and pace of the curriculum, especially as we ‘mind the gaps’ due to school closure and Covid-19, means that your child will miss vital teaching and learning if they are absent.

Historical research shows that children who miss school are less likely to achieve academically compared to those who are in school full time.

### Attainment in KS2 tests by levels of overall absence split into percentage point bands

Figure 1: Percentage of pupils achieving stated levels at the end of KS2 in the 2012/13 academic year by percentage of sessions missed over KS2

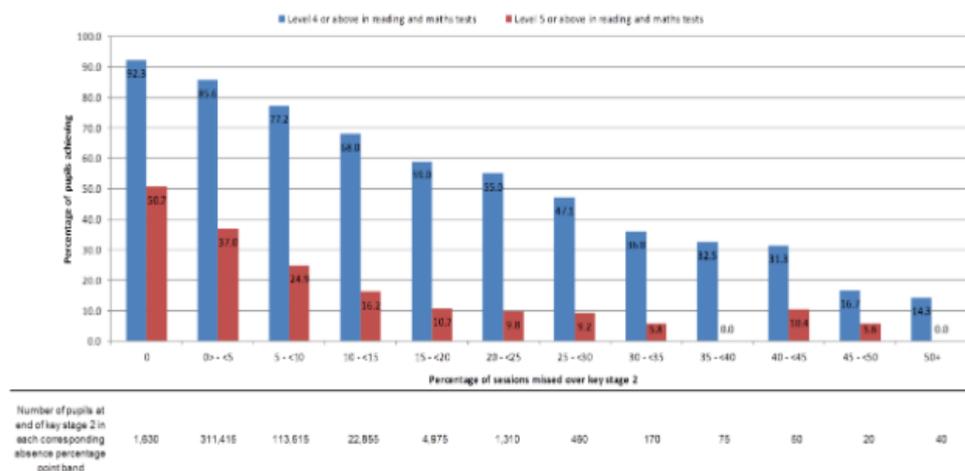


Figure 1 shows that in general the **higher the percentage of sessions missed** across the key stage, the **lower the likely level of attainment** at the end of KS2. **Pupils with no absence are 1.6 times more likely to achieve level 4 or above**, and 4.7 times more likely to achieve level 5 or above, than pupils that missed 15-20 per cent of all sessions. In September 2020 it is even more vital that children are in school as we introduce further interventions and bespoke learning.

(Reference: DfE report Feb 2015. The link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4)

### Social media

In computing lessons children learn about staying safe online. They learn that:

- Anything posted online is there forever
- They should not say anything online that they would not say face to face
- Children must be at least 13 to have a Facebook account
- Any issues with using social networking that impact on school will be dealt with

Please help your child to be responsible online and do not condone them lying about their age to set up a Facebook account. Ensure their privacy settings on any internet account they do have are set at the highest level.

Over the last few years we have dealt with numerous issues related to online accounts, from bullying to inappropriate use of language and behaviour. Many of these incidents have taken form teachers and the senior staff several hours to unpick and takes staff away from their prime focus of teaching and learning.

Parents are always informed of any incidents involving their child and many have been upset, especially if they have been unaware that their child had been on line. In the most serious cases the police have been called.

Help the teaching staff to focus on teaching your child and not spend time sorting out issues which have occurred outside of school time.

Regarding the national curriculum, children will be assessed against key performance descriptors they are studying. Children may be assessed against variable descriptors depending on their ability. Children will be assessed as emerging, developing, secure or to have mastered the required skills.

With schools closed March 2020, children returning to school will naturally have some gaps in their learning. Staff pledge to 'mind the gaps' to ensure children catch up by using proven interventions, bespoke teaching and enjoying the challenge.

### **Helping Your Child At Home**

This section of the booklet will help you in supporting your child's learning at home. There are some suggestions of ways in which you can help your child to learn and advice of how to help with homework. The most important message to give your child is that learning is fun.

Most of the learning you can do with your child at this stage in their development is through talking and playing games together. Talk to your child about what they are learning at school. Encourage them to find out things for themselves and to ask questions. Read books with your child.

### **How you can help with homework.**

The teaching staff write the homework (subject, task and when it is due) on the board or interactive whiteboard for children to copy. Ask your child to show you what they have written in their homework diary and ask them to explain what they have to do.

Although homework in Key Stage 2 can be completed by children independently, we suggest parents and carers support their children's homework as this will make it most meaningful. However, this does not mean doing it for them!

If your child has a problem with homework e.g. they have tried to do it but do not understand how to, then write a note in their diary. If you anticipate your child is going to find it difficult to complete the homework due to a family event, e.g. a party for granny's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, then write a note ahead of time and we may be able to arrange for them to do it in school or extend the deadline.

Make sure your child has a quiet place to work with no distractions. Talk through the activity with your child before they start.

Encourage and praise them when they have completed the activities.

Homework will be set to support and reinforce what has been taught, so, for example, children will only be asked to complete a topic in maths that has been taught in class.

### **Online homework**

We have subscribed to a number of online resources to help keep our teaching and the children's learning up to date.

Your child will be given their own personal log on details for each of these sites and will be shown how to use them in their lessons. Homework will sometimes be set from these sites.

### **Maths**

For Maths we use the My Maths website, which includes lessons that cover the topics from the class lessons. If your child has My Maths homework and has forgotten how to complete the activity, they can view the lesson first before attempting the task. They

can always re-do the task if they are not happy with their score. Tasks set will follow what has been taught in class.

We also use Abacus Active Learn for Maths. This is a new site which allows children to create an avatar and earn points to customise it once they have completed tasks set. We hope this will add to the fun of learning and as there are three levels, children will also be able to use this site to challenge themselves.

### **English**

We also use Abacus Active Learn for English. Texts will be set for children to read under the “Bug Club” tab. Little green bugs appear in the texts which prompt children to answer a question related to the text. If they complete these correctly they will be able to earn rewards which they can then “spend”.

Each child will be given an individual log on name and will need to set a password. They should keep a note of this in their diary.

[www.activelearnprimary.co.uk](http://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk)

Teachers will spend time demonstrating how to use both of these new resources before homework is set.

### **Reading**

Every child should have a reading book with them at school. At least two morning registration times each week are given over to DEAR (Drop everything and read). Each classroom has a collection of suitable books, which children can borrow and take home. Children are encouraged to try new authors and types of books. A suggested reading list is available on the website <http://ponteland.academy> to help you on your visits to the library or bookshop.

Children are asked to log their reading every day. This should be done in their school diary, with your signature beside their log.

### **Tips on Hearing Your Child Read**

At parents’ evenings, parents have told us they would like more information about helping their children read. Here are some suggestions on how you can help to make this a positive experience.

#### **Choose a quiet time**

Set aside a quiet time with no distractions. Ten to fifteen minutes is usually long enough.

#### **Make reading enjoyable**

Make reading an enjoyable experience. Sit with your child. Try not to pressurise if he or she is reluctant. Take turns and read a page each.

### **Maintain the flow**

If your child mispronounces a word do not interrupt immediately. Instead allow opportunity for self-correction. It is better to tell a child some unknown words to maintain the flow rather than insisting on trying to build them all up from the sounds of the letters. If your child does try to 'sound out' words, encourage the use of letter sounds rather than 'alphabet names'.

### **Be positive**

If your child says something nearly right to start with that is fine. Say 'Let's read it together' and point to the words as you say them. Boost your child's confidence with constant praise for even the smallest achievement.

### **Talk about the books**

There is more to being a good reader than just being able to read the words accurately. Being able to understand is vital. Talk to your child about the book; about the pictures, the characters, how they think the story will end and their favourite part. You will then see how well they have understood as you help them to develop good comprehension skills, including skills of inference and deduction.

### **Success is the key**

Remember 'Nothing succeeds like success'. Until your child has built up their confidence, it is better to keep to easier books. To avoid readers being reluctant, choose books with flow, a few challenging words and easy to understand text.

### **Visit a Library, bookshops; Google; or use a Kindle**

Encourage your child to use resources regularly and visit bookshops to browse the latest titles. Many bookshops have very knowledgeable staff who will only be too happy to advise you.

### **Variety is important**

Remember children need to experience a variety of reading materials e.g. picture books, hard backs, comics, magazines, poems, and information books. Even the back of cereal packets at breakfast is good!

### **Texts used in English lessons**

In addition to using online resources, we use recognised traditional texts to extend our children's reading and understanding. Many of these are used in set English lessons and in class PSHE lessons. We explore themes, characterisation and structure in depth and children keep a reading log for the texts in PSHE.

## **Helpful websites**

### **School website**

School information: Up to date curriculum map, weekly clubs list, school day, uniform etc.

<http://www.ponteland.academy>

### **Key Stage 2 topic revision (Science/History/Geography)**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks2/>

### **Advice about children's behaviour**

<http://www.kidsbehaviour.co.uk/>

### **E-safety; keeping your child safe online**

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/Parents/>

### **Information about changes to National Curriculum and assessment**

<http://www.theschoolrun.com/primary-school-grading-system-explained-for-parents>