



**Chollerton First School**

Station Road  
Barrasford,  
Northumberland  
NE48 4AA

Headteacher: Mrs Hazel Davey

(01434) 681572

### EYFS –

In September 2020, 11 children began their Reception year in Class 1.

Initial assessments revealed a wide variety of abilities within this group.

All of the children needed work on personal, social and emotional interaction. It is the belief of the staff involved that these children missed vital interaction in their pre-school due to Covid-19 lockdown at the beginning of March 2020.

Therefore, the time needed to be spent working on appropriate behaviour towards one another in school.

Children needed training in self-help skills; getting dressed, going to the toilet, eating. Personal skills which would have been worked on at pre-school.

The children settled well. The majority, nine out of 11, opted for full-time attendance once the initial two week introduction period had passed. Two parents decided to let their child attend mornings only.

After October half-term, we took part in the pre-adopter EYFS assessment profile, a trial which would be the forerunner of assessment in Early Years for September 2021. The children were asked questions relating to maths and their understanding of language and phonics. It was easy to administer and the children were happy doing it.

The children enjoyed the Christmas term. They were very pleased to be back for the first day of the Spring Term, ten out of 11 children returned. One family decided to continue to isolate. They had been isolating before Christmas so they could spend Christmas with grandparents.

At present, February 2021, four out of 11 children attend school either part-time or full-time. For the other children, work is sent via Google Classroom, including a plan of what the children would be doing. Websites are recommended, relevant resources including stories which have been read and recorded on video, are made available and a variety of activities are suggested. Worksheets to support learning are provided and in some circumstances tailored to individual pupils learning styles.

Regular contact is made with parents via email, and children have been sending in examples of activities they have been engaged in. Reading books can be exchanged at school.

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Supporting the parents mentally has been a major part of my communication this time, either face-to-face or on email.

We have met on Google Classroom with the children who have a birthday in lockdown, singing them Happy Birthday and having brief chats.

There will be no end of year profile assessment for the end of Reception.

It remains to be seen when children can return, but we expect the need for social interaction and the build-up of physical stamina to take precedent over everything else initially while we assess where children are in their learning journey.

### **Hazel Davey**

In preschool we started the autumn term with a mixed group of 2/3 year olds. We had 4, three year and 3, two-year-olds. Another two-year-old joined part way through the term.

We continued to follow our coronavirus policy and risk assessment and were therefore unable to offer a place to one child who already attended nursery in Hexham.

This year it is noticeable that there are a greater number of children coming into preschool with "special needs". We have 3 children requiring support from the SLT service, 1 child needing support from the Inclusion Coordinator and 1 child who has a medical condition that needs extra vigilance on our part.

This will have an impact on the school in the coming years. Looking at those children due to enter in September 2021, I believe that only one out of the current intake of 4 will be at the point we would normally expect of children on transition.

After Christmas, we decided to follow the same government guidance as issued to schools. Initially only opening for children of critical workers or for those children we assessed to be vulnerable. This meant that we had 4 children for the first few weeks. However, we were then informed that we had to offer places to all children in receipt of government funding. I contacted the families and gave them the opportunity to send in their children, 1 out of the 3 children returned.

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At this point it seemed unfair to discriminate against the final two families, so we took the decision to open it up to all children currently on role. We now have 7 out of a possible 9 children attending.

We do not intend to accept any new two-year-olds until schools reopen to all pupils.

We are grateful to have been included in the asymptomatic testing that is now taking place in school. As an independent preschool we are not eligible for home testing kits and would normally be expected to book a test in Hexham. Having access to twice weekly tests for staff members offers us a level of reassurance that we really appreciate.

### **Pat Fairless**

February 2021

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