



Friday 20th March 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Who would have thought when we started the school year in September that we would be facing this challenge? Our thoughts go to all of you and especially to those who may be facing additional anxiety about their own health, loved ones or financial insecurity. For many of your children, this will be the last day in school for some time. However, whilst in the short term there are some challenging times ahead, I have confidence that with continued community spirit many positive things will come out of this national crisis. We hope that during this time you might also be able to reflect on the positives and take stock of the really important things such as spending quality time with our loved ones. Please remember to keep smiling and laughing through all of this. This difficult time will pass.

It has certainly been a challenging few weeks here in school as we have tried to navigate and respond to, the often conflicting or non-existent guidance. (Or, as I like to say, trying to make sense of the nonsense.) Thank you for all the messages of support you have sent us. Our staff really appreciate this and it has given them a much needed boost!

Home Learning

Over the past week we have been gradually putting together a plan for home learning in the event that schools were closed. We did not want to overwhelm parents/carers with too much information and were keen to mirror, as far as possible, the learning that would have taken place in school. This has been challenging given the lack of information from the Government. In addition any online learning platforms have been overwhelmed by the volume of activity. Given the current impact of increased activity online and also for the wellbeing of the children we did not want to rely entirely on web based learning. We will therefore be taking the following approach:

- Firstly, we need to be clear that we are in an unprecedented national emergency. **It is not the intention that activities provided for home learning will replicate being in front of a teacher**, and there is no expectation that children will make the same progress as they would in school at this time. However, it is important that children have lots to keep them busy and to maintain their motivation to learn and love learning. Once schools reopen, we will be addressing how we can help children catch up.
- Today your child has been given an information pack which includes some general guidance for you and some activities they will need to complete. **We would advise that you read the guidance first.** *(If your child is not in school today we will be posting this out to you.)*
- We have set up a **Home Learning Page** on our web site. It can be found in the **children's section**. Each year group has its own page. Class Teachers

will be setting work in two week blocks. In future, this will be posted on the year group page. A paper version of the first two weeks is in this pack.

- In your child's learning pack you will also find a letter from **Purple Mash** with your child's individual username and password. Purple Mash is a suite of online learning tools. Once we are up and running the Class Teachers will be able to set work for each class and eventually individual children. Your child will only have access to their own work and the system is fully compliant with GDPR regulations. The Teachers will be able to access the accounts of all the children in their class to monitor how they are doing. **We will let you know when your child's on line learning tasks are ready to access.** If you do not have access to the internet or a computer please contact school and we will look at alternative provision.
- In addition you will find a copy of 'My Activity Book' for you to print at home in the class pages. If you do not have access to a printer, please contact school and we will arrange to get a copy to you.
- We will continue to send a weekly newsletter via email to parents/carers to keep you up to date with any news.
- We also plan to send a weekly message to the children.
- Once we know how many children we have in school and the guidelines on staffing we will consider the practicalities of other alternatives.
- Please note all plans will be continually reviewed and are subject to change as the national situation evolves.

Please bear with us whilst we settle in to our new routine and set up the online learning. If you have any questions you can contact your child's Class Teacher via the office email office@westbridgford-inf.notts.sch.uk

Statutory Testing SATs and Phonics Screening

All statutory testing including the Year Two SATs and the Year One Phonics Screening have been cancelled this year.

Government Guidance

As I said in my letter to you this morning, we have now received more information regarding school closure and who are Key Workers.

The focus remains that **social distancing** is the main aim of school closures and we need your support in keeping numbers in school **as low as** possible at this time. The government has asked that 'parents keep their children at home wherever possible and schools are to remain open for those who absolutely **need** to attend'

Schools are being asked to remain open to provide **care (not education)** for a limited number of children.

Many parents who are Key Workers will have been already asked to work from home and their children should remain at home with them. The offer of school to provide childcare is to those people who are Key Workers **and are still** being asked to **physically** go into their work place.

The government asks that you follow these principles when requesting your childcare place:

- 1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be**
2. If a child needs specialist support, *is vulnerable** or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available to them
- 3. Parents should not rely** for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing **category such as grandparents**, friends, or **family members with underlying conditions**
- 4. Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults**

***Children with EHCPs** – school will contact you if your child falls into this category

****Children with social workers** - school will contact you if your child falls into this category

Children who qualify for Free School Meals – benefits related (not Universal Free School Meals i.e. all KS1 children) we are organising a voucher scheme for you if your child is not coming into school and we will be in touch with you to give you the voucher.

We cannot emphasise enough the need to keep the numbers as low as possible in school to help contain the spread of the virus. Your cooperation is appreciated.

WBOOSC After School Provision

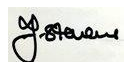
WBOOSC as per Government guidance will continue to provide before and after school care for **key workers**. They will drop off children eligible to be in school at the start of the school day as usual. In the evenings they will collect them from school and walk them to their cabin at the Cottages Site of West Bridgford Junior School on Tudor Road. Any enquiries about WBOOSC should be directed to them and not the school office.

Ongoing Communication and updates

As you can appreciate this is an ever evolving situation and communication will be key. Staffing permitting, we expect to have a fully operational administration team available to take calls and respond to emails. We will send out any updates by email or text as they arise.

Once again thank you for your patience and understanding. We are so fortunate to have such a wonderful school community. Wishing you all the very best over the coming months. Be safe!

Kind regards



Fiona Stevens

Head Teacher