



17 March 2020

Dear Parents

Coronavirus update and school measures

As we can all appreciate the current climate due to the spread of Coronavirus is simply unprecedented and all members of the community are working hard to keep things going whilst protecting themselves and loved ones.

The school is taking guidance from the Government, World Health Organisation and Local Authority daily updates and these are the sources of information that we will continue to follow. As you are aware just yesterday evening Boris Johnson has instructed further measures that include:

- Everyone should avoid gatherings and crowded places, such as pubs, clubs and theatres
- Everyone should work from home if they can
- All "unnecessary" visits to friends and relatives in care homes should cease
- By next weekend, those with the most serious health conditions must be "largely shielded from social contact for around 12 weeks"
- If one person in any household has a new continuous persistent cough or fever, everyone living there must stay at home for 14 days
- Schools will not be closed for the moment

Chief medical adviser Prof Chris Whitty said the group of people who should take "particular care to minimise their social contact" were:

- People over the age of 70
- Other adults who would normally be advised to have the flu vaccine (such as those with chronic diseases)
- Pregnant women

So the big question is how we are going to advise parents and what are the measures that school can and will take? Following the announcements and guidelines above the school has now taken the following measures:

- **All Parents Evenings are cancelled- from today onwards.** If you have significant areas that you wanted to talk over with the teacher then please let us know and the teacher will ring you to discuss.
- **Amendments to school dinners will be enforce from tomorrow-** no salad bar or bread to reduce food handling and puddings may vary from the menu as HC3S have instructed all kitchens not to carry over any food from one day to the next and all food has to be cooked the morning of service. At present HC3S are still able to offer all menu choices however this may change if they are unable to fully staff and of course we will keep you up to date if this needs to happen.

- **All sporting events and competitions are cancelled for the foreseeable future**
- **All in school assemblies and parent invitation events such as Listen2Me concert and Easter assembly are cancelled.**
- Year 3 and Year 5 residential to Blunts Barn - these are not due to take place until July so we will wait to see how guidance effects these over the coming months.
- **All school visitors who do not need to be onsite have been cancelled-** this includes the Year 3 Roman Day on Friday- we also feel that with families self-isolating we would rather postpone this so that children do not miss out.
- **Staff who are showing signs of coughs or those in a higher risk bracket are being asked to self-isolate.**
- **If parents feel that their family is at a greater risk due to an underlying health condition either that the child has or a primary carer whom they will be in contact with then the family is recommended to self-isolate.** This is not a decision the school can take, although we may advise for families where we feel they are at a higher risk. Although attendance figures will be lower, there will be no penalties incurred for taking such precautions.

How will the school manage distance learning should the school be advised to close?

As a school we are going to offer a range of options for parents to use. We feel that this is about supporting families in such challenging times and not adding additional pressure. Some parents will be keen for their child's learning not to suffer, others will feel that at present keeping them well and safe is the priority that should take precedence.

All year groups will put up links and Powerpoints linked to key learning for the remainder of Spring term and where required the start of Summer. We will also have links to a range of websites that your child might be interested in learning about.

Year 6 children will be asked to complete their boosters books- whilst we are unsure about what will happen with the SATs testing, what we do know is that it was always more about being secondary school ready with all key areas secure. There is further support on the school website with links to BBC Bitesize and other online learning tools.

My biggest piece of advice in terms of learning is that actually now is the time that we as parents can do a wide range of learning away from computer screens. If all children came back to school after any break with a stronger hold on reading, spelling and basic maths linked to calculating, telling the time, learning of times tables and understanding of money and communication skills then we would be in a great place in terms of supporting your child with learning.

I think it is important that during this time we recognise that many families will be dealing with illness, anxiety and financial concerns, so learning through life experiences together may be the best way. I recommend playing board games, completing jigsaws, learning card games, gardening, cooking together, talking and spending precious time with them which we often struggle to do with hectic lives. Additionally some fresh air and exercise and limiting the amount of time that they are plugged into social media and online gaming. We are very lucky in this part of the world that we can keep social distance requirements in the New Forest or walking along beaches.

Tomorrow the school will be sending home every child with a green learning book- the children can use this to record any learning from home if needed and also to undertake topics and projects that interest them- they may want to develop a better understanding of countries of the world, some of the science behind the approach to this pandemic, or simply art work or topics linked to History or some of the skills and outings that you undertake as a family.

If you wish to undertake a more formal schooling approach then I would suggest no more than 45 minutes of English and Maths each day and perhaps an hour of topic. Please remember that all children can access TT Rockstars, Oxford Reading are offering free online learning, as is Twinkl and those children who complete the Reading Plus program in school can continue their sessions from home.

I suppose my final message to you all is that through situations such as this you must put your health first, everything else can be caught up on, try to do things that keeps spirits high and just know that doing your best will be good enough.

Should we need to close then please keep an eye on Teachers2Parents text service and also the school website. We will be contactable via email and staff will also be available for contactable should you wish to have guidance on learning, curriculum or just need advice linked to learning or signposting of other support either before any closure or during.

It is my current understanding that teachers will be working from home during this period should it arise and this time will be spent developing the curriculum content further and ensuring that when we are back in school the learning that we deliver to your children is of the highest quality.

The school has already suffered staff shortages due to other illnesses and I am incredibly proud of them all for the way in which they have worked together, either in person or remotely to support each other and your children.

Now is the time for us to look after each other, remember what is great about living in a community and taking sensible precautions that enable as many families as possible to come through this with minimal consequences.

Yours sincerely



Mrs J Walker

Headteacher

