

Dear Parents and Carers,

It certainly has been a strange start to the year, the third Lockdown definitely feels harder to all of us. I think we are all less resilient than we were last time and we desperately want things to go back to normal.

Infection rates are slowing nationally but figures for North West Leicestershire have increased this week, with 390.9 cases per 100 thousand, so we all need to continue to follow the rules to get these numbers down in our local area. The message remains the same- if you can keep your children at home you should...home is the safest place for them to be.

***There is a lot of important information on this week's newsletter so please read it carefully!***

### **Half term**

Yesterday, Gavin Williamson the Education Minister said that he would give schools two weeks notice of full reopening. As it stands at the moment we still plan to close for half term on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February and will reopen as planned on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February. No remote learning work will be set during this period. Until then, things will stay as they have been with school open only for the children of critical workers and vulnerable children.

### **Remote Learning**

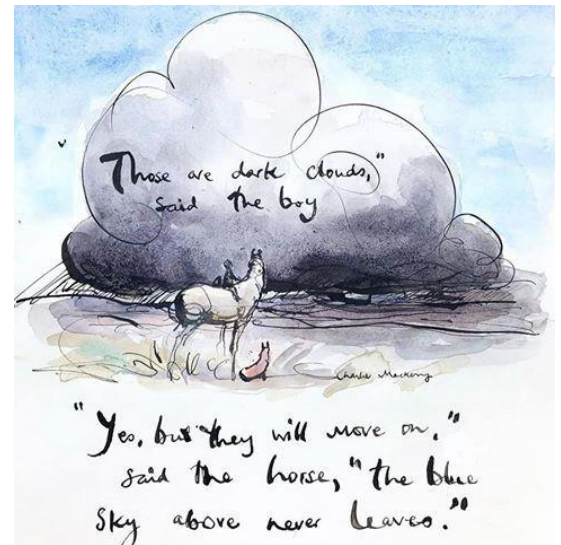
Teachers have been contacting parents this week and feedback regarding our remote learning offer has been overwhelmingly positive.

All of our staff are having to adapt very quickly to totally different ways of working and are learning new skills at lightning speed! We certainly don't underestimate the challenges that home learning poses for parents and families, especially those who are balancing work and other responsibilities.

As a school, we have taken the decision to not deliver 'live teaching' for a number of reasons. Not all families have the technology available to allow all their children and adults to be working on their own device throughout the day. As a school and with the support of our local community we have already provided many devices to families, but do not currently have the capacity to provide sufficient numbers of devices to all children in every family.

Managing all the needs of a class of around 30 children over the internet is very difficult, especially at primary age. By using some pre-recorded lessons, it means that children can access the learning at a time that suits them and the rest of their household and children can complete the work at their own pace. Teachers are also looking at and monitoring the work that is being submitted throughout the day so are therefore able to pick up on and address any misconceptions.

All children learn in different ways so what works for one family would not work for another. Our chosen method of a mix of materials offers families the flexibility to manage their child's learning around any other commitments such as work meetings or appointments and helps them to timetable their day to be able to support each child if and when necessary. We know that some children do their learning in the morning



and others in the afternoon and that's absolutely fine; we really are trying to offer a package that can suit as many of our family's needs as possible.

Teachers are now including pre-recorded lessons and introductions as well as voice messages, these are being uploaded as the staff are learning the necessary skills and knowledge to record and upload them.

The government has set out clear expectations of the amount of work that we should be setting for children during this period, and I know that there is a lot in the media about children 'missing out' and 'falling behind'. However, I want to stress, as I did during the last period of school closure, please do not try to complete work that is worrying your children (or you!). If you can only complete English and Maths that's fine. Please try to be kind to yourselves when fitting remote learning around your already busy lives...all any of us can do is our best.

Next week for each class, we hope to start weekly wellbeing Zoom meetings with class teachers. During the last lock down, feedback from families told us that one of the things that the children missed the most about not being in school was having contact with the rest of the children in their class. This will not be a lesson, but a chance to touch base with the class teacher, ask any questions that they may have about their learning and see their friends from school. Look out for more details about this next week.

### **Lateral Flow Device Covid testing for school staff**

Some of you may have read in the press about the roll out of Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing for primary school staff. The idea of testing the school workforce is to try and manage COVID-19 infection rates. Approximately 1 in 3 people are asymptomatic when they contract COVID-19 and it is believed that the use of regular testing amongst staff will help to identify those who may be positive and are infectious yet asymptomatic.

From next week, staff will test at home, twice a week and will notify school of their results. If the LFD test is negative, staff can come in to school as normal. **If staff test positive with the LFD test, then they will need to isolate immediately and book a full test. We will need to immediately identify close contacts and potentially close that bubble to children and staff.** Staff will then be sent for a full COVID-19 test and if it is negative children and staff in isolation can return to school.

### **Safeguarding Concerns during School Closure**

We are working hard as a school to do everything we reasonably can to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children, whilst they are not in school.

We would therefore recommend that you:

- Monitor closely your child's activity on social media
- Let us know if there have been any issues that we need to be aware of as soon as possible so we can respond promptly and appropriately
- Contact Social Services if you feel they should be aware of an issue. You can call the Social Services Central Duty Team on 0116 305 0005 or make an online referral via the following link:  
<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/community-safety/reportabuse-or-neglect-of-a-child>



- Contact the police straight away if you believe a child is in immediate danger.

### **Covid-19**

If your child is currently learning in school remember that if there is a positive case of Covid in the bubble with a child or a member of staff, the group will need to isolate for 10 days, and they will all receive remote learning.

### **Remember if your child is displaying ANY of the three main Covid symptoms:**

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

You **MUST** request a COVID test immediately. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Thank you once again for your ongoing support. As always, if you need any help or support please contact school.

Regards,



Sylvie Newman  
Executive Headteacher