



Thursday 16th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that everyone has had a relaxing and peaceful Easter break. It has been a very strange period in school over Easter, as we have remained open for the children of key workers and have been working hard to set up the Free School Meals vouchers for those families entitled to this support.

The Government has said that there are unlikely to be any changes to the current lockdown arrangements for at least the next three weeks, potentially much longer. Therefore, below are a few updates you may need to be aware of:

FSM

Eligible families should now be receiving the £15.00 per child, per week 'Sodexo' vouchers owed for the Easter holiday period this week (if not already). They will be back dated to the weeks beginning 06.04.20 and 13.04.20.

From next Monday 20th April the FSM vouchers will be provided by a different company called 'Edenred', these vouchers will be sent directly to parents emails and will then repeat each week until the current crisis is over. Please let us know if you encounter any problems with this. Thank you for your patience with this issue, it has been extremely problematic to organise these vouchers due to the high demand for them across the country. Hopefully things have now settled down and should now be much more straightforward.

If you are not yet registered for Free School Meals and feel like circumstances may now mean you might be eligible please check the following criteria. It is well worthwhile doing this.

Your child is eligible for free school meals if you're in receipt of **one** of the following benefits:

- **Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400.**
- **Income Support**
- **Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance**
- **Income-related Employment and Support Allowance**
- **Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999**
- **The guarantee element of Pension Credit**
- **Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for the four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)**
- **Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit) with an annual income of no more than £16,190**

If you are in receipt of any of the above benefits you should apply online to Dudley Council ASAP using this link <https://customer.dudley.gov.uk/free-school-meals/create/> This application only takes around five minutes to complete; you will need your National Insurance number. Please be aware that we are unable to order vouchers for new applicants until authorised to do so by Dudley council, however, I believe this process is quite efficient.

HOME LEARNING

The new (Week 3) Home Learning Packs will be placed on the website and sent out via the School Life app over the weekend ready for the start of the summer term on Monday morning! We appreciate how hard parents are working to complete this work with children – it is very important to keep the children's minds active and to continue their learning in the best way possible, so please continue to do all that you can to minimise the impact of this extended closure on your child's education. If pupils complete their current exercise books, please contact the school office for a new one and we will get one to you ASAP.

TWITTER

We launched our new school 'Twitter' account recently. The school account is [@NetherbrookS](https://twitter.com/NetherbrookS). Our aim with this is to provide an additional form of communication and a celebration platform for everything going on at home and eventually in school. So if your child has worked hard or you have done something lovely that you would like us to share then please email it in to us at the following address: info@netherbrook.dudley.sch.uk and we will gladly share it. This Twitter account is also hosted on the front page of our school website, so it is very easy to find.

TEACHER EMAILS TO SUPPORT HOME LEARNING

New year group email accounts are now set up for you to contact class teachers with any concerns or questions you may have. Details for these accounts are on your child's year group pages on the School Life app already, and will be active from Monday 20th April. This will give pupils and parents the chance to ask any questions about the Home Learning Packs and to get a reply.

KINGSWOOD RESIDENTIAL

I know that some Year 6 parents have asked for clarity on the situation regarding this trip. Currently, the Kingswood Centre is closed and we haven't been able to get a response to our emails or phone calls. It is quite likely that we will have to cancel, as it's doubtful that the centre will re-open and I imagine that some families might have concerns about children attending anyway. Rest assured any money paid is safe and we will contact you again shortly to discuss the options and arrange any refund once we have clarified the situation with them.

SCHOOL SUPPORT

Some of you will have received phone calls from school staff involved in the pastoral care for our pupils. These calls are a chance for parents and pupils to hear a familiar voice and have a chat about anything that is worrying them or causing concern. We are here to help in any way that we can.

As always, thank you for your ongoing support. Please feel free to contact the school if you have any questions or concerns. If you need any support or advice there is always someone here who will be happy to talk with you.

Take care and remember – [Stay at home](#) | [Protect the NHS](#) | [Save lives](#)

Kind regards

P Rawlings

Mr P Rawlings

Headteacher