



Thursday 30th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that everyone is safe and well at home and that things are going well with the home learning packs.

Twitter

Many thanks to those of you who have sent us some pictures and videos of the children's work – most of these have been added to our Twitter account for sharing. If you haven't had chance to look at this our Twitter 'handle' is [@Netherbrooks](https://twitter.com/Netherbrooks), so please take a look – it is also hosted on the front page of our school website. Ms Davies in the school office has done a great job of managing this account and all of our other recent videos on the internet, so a big thank you to her, she will happily add good news stories and fun things the children have done.

Home Learning

Many thanks again to all of you who have been working hard on the pupil's home learning packs. Further to my text message earlier this week, we do completely appreciate that the home learning may be very difficult to manage for many parents, as it isn't easy to navigate the app sometimes and in conjunction with parents own jobs or other commitments it can be a challenge. To clarify our expectation is that where possible pupils should spend at least two hours a day on this work. If this isn't possible then please do what you can. The Government is very concerned about children falling significantly behind due to the current crisis, so whatever you can do at home to keep pupils on track and learning will make a big difference. However, a happy and harmonious home is also important!

In case parents are not already aware - the home learning packs are available on both our school website as well as the School Life app. If you are having any difficulties accessing the app, please contact the school office asap and we will do our best to help you access this. Please check out the website too.

Free School Meals (FSM)

Hopefully the FSM Edenred vouchers are now coming through to all of our families that are entitled to this support. We have had successful FSM applications for over 10 more pupils recently so it really is well worthwhile applying online if you feel you may be eligible. Please look at previous newsletters for details on how to do this. If you have any issues receiving or using the Edenred vouchers, then please contact the school immediately. They should now be issued directly to email addresses on a weekly basis.

School Support

If you find yourselves in financial difficulties or need some support on any issues whilst we are closed, then please do feel free to contact the school and we will do what we can to help you ourselves or signpost you to where else you can go for support.

Class teachers and pastoral staff are now ringing home to some families to see how children are getting on. This is based on our own information about our pupils who may need a bit of extra support from school during the closure period. So if you have a 'no caller ID' call then please answer it and have a chat to the teachers and let us know how things are going, it would be lovely if staff can talk to their pupils for a few minutes too.

Don't forget that there are now Year Group email accounts set up for you to contact your child's teachers. A few parents have commented that they haven't emailed us, as they didn't want to bother anyone.

Please do get in touch if you need help with anything to do with the home learning. Other queries should be sent to the info@netherbrook.dudley.sch.uk account as this is seen by the senior staff.

Key Workers Child Places

Anyone requiring a new place for their children in school during the current crisis will need to provide a signed letter from their employer stating the parents job role and why they are a key worker. Please remember that the current Government guidance still states that individuals should remain at home and isolated from other people not living in the same household. Children should remain at home unless there are no other child care options.

The Government Keyworker lists currently includes:

- Clinical National Health Service staff
- Police officers
- Journalists
- Prison officers
- Firefighters
- Supermarket delivery drivers
- Those caring for elderly and vulnerable people
- Care home workers
- Armed forces
- Teachers
- Those employed in distributing food and essential supplies

Please contact the school if you feel that you may need a place for your child and you meet the eligibility criteria.

School re-opening

Although this issue is being discussed a lot in the media, as yet we have received no word on when schools will eventually re-open. This will be announced by the Government at one of the daily briefings. Schools will find out at the same time as everyone else – we are not given advanced warning of any change in the Government's approaches.

Some countries such as France and Denmark have now begun to relax their lockdown restrictions relating to schools but until there is an official UK announcement we will remain closed. As soon as anything is announced we will write to you to explain what will happen next. The Government has stated that schools will not re-open for all pupils at the same time and any re-opening will be a phased and gradual approach.

Take care of yourselves and stay safe. Remember to follow us on Twitter and share your positive family experiences with us.

Warmest regards

Mr P Rawlings

Headteacher

P.S. I hope you have all seen the bedtime stories, Blinding Lights Staff Dance Challenge and the 'Queen' videos on YouTube! I love the responses we have had back so far. Keep it up!!! ☺