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## School Closure Weekly Update

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents,

We are very much looking forward to welcoming all our children back to school on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. Whilst this signals the start of a gradual return to normality, we still have many restrictions in place and must ensure that we adhere to these over the coming months in order to avoid any further periods of closure.

We will have two very clear priorities when we fully reopen again. Firstly the safety of our school community will continue to be paramount. Our year group bubbles will remain in place and we will be continuing to take proactive steps to avoid contact between children from different year groups. Different year groups will have staggered playtimes and lunchtimes and the majority of year groups will eat lunch once again in the classrooms to avoid contact in the dining room. We will be continuing with our enhanced cleaning regime, having had a full deep clean over the half term break and a Covid sanitisation of classrooms scheduled for the weekend before we reopen. The children will have a regular system of hand washing in place and will be reminded of the principles of good respiratory hygiene.

Our second priority will be assessing where the children are now with their learning after an extended period of absence and ensuring that suitable measures are put in place to support their academic progress as well and their wellbeing.

Once again, we will be asking for your continued support

### Message for the Children...

Hi everyone,

I hope that you all had a brilliant half term holiday. I spent mine walking on the beach, reading and having FaceTime with my family. We did a virtual 'escape room' challenge which was good fun.

I'm really looking forward to seeing everyone back together in school in just over a week's time. School hasn't felt the same with most children at home so it will be lovely to see you all again. I hope that you are looking forward to seeing your friends, teachers and teaching assistants once again. It's ok to perhaps feel 'nervousited' about coming back – we're all here to look after you and to help you settle back into school life as soon as possible – so don't worry.

Enjoy your last week of remote learning and we'll see you soon.

Sending smiles to you all.

From

Miss Talbot

in ensuring that we work together to keep our school community as safe as possible.

Please can I therefore take the opportunity to remind you of the following:

- Do not send your child to school if they are unwell and displaying symptoms of Covid-19 (raised temperature, new persistent cough, loss of taste or smell). They must get tested and self-isolate. Your child must also self-isolate if anyone in the household displays symptoms or if anyone they have had contact with displays symptoms. This is crucially important to keep transmission rates as low as possible.
- Remember to wear a face mask when dropping off or picking up your children from school. School staff will be wearing face coverings in communal areas of the school and some staff may wear them in the classroom. Children will not be wearing face masks in school.
- Please ensure that you use the entry and exit points (blue route and red route) that you were using at the start of the year. These haven't changed. As the Chimney's path gets quite congested, please ensure that you don't double back on this, against the flow of parents coming into school. If you come down the path, you will need to come onto the school site and exit through the Lockholt Close exit.
- Be considerate in how you park. Use the Chimney's car park rather than parking in Lockholt Close or the adjoining roads. After spending so much time indoors, it's good to get out and walk.
- Please adhere to the National measures in place. The rule of 6 people being able to meet outside does not come into force until 29<sup>th</sup> March at the earliest so please stick to the rules. Your children shouldn't yet be mixing with other children at the park or in groups at each other's houses unless you are part of a specific childcare bubble.
- Visitors to the school site will once again be limited, so if you do need to contact the school, please either phone or email.

By working together we can ensure that we are taking all reasonable steps to keep our school community as safe as possible.

### **Free School Meals.**

The last vouchers for children entitled to benefit related free school meals will finish on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March. When the children return they will once again be able to have a free school lunch provided by the school kitchen. All children in Years R to 2 will be able to have a free school meal under the Government's scheme for free meals for infants. They will also be able to have a free piece of fruit or vegetable in the afternoon.

Across the county there has been a 25% increase in the number of children who are now entitled to benefit related free school meals. Please refer to the flier attached to this ParentMail for further information and to see whether your children may be entitled.

## **Breakfast Club**

The temporary Breakfast Club places offered to those key worker children attending school during the closure period, will finish on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March. Please ensure that you make alternative childcare arrangements as we will be unable to offer your child a place after this date. I will add all these children to the waiting list again and will notify you should a place become available.

Those children who had a place at Breakfast Club during term 1 and 2 will be able to return to Breakfast Club once more from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. Please ensure that payments are made by Thursday each week in order to retain your place. If you no longer need your place, please let us know so that this can be offered to someone else.

## **Books to be returned to school**

At some point during the week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> March, please can your children bring their Unexpected Adventure Trail books back to school. The teachers will be able to have a closer look at everything that your children has been doing at home to help inform future planning and intervention. As remote feedback has already been given, the work in these books won't be marked.

The children can keep their homework trail books at home so they can continue to work on their term 4 trail which will be available on the website on Monday. These should then be brought back to school on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April for the next Homework Showcase Trail. Those children who have been working at home, will then be able to collect any stickers for terms 2, 3 and 4 all at once. We won't forget!

If you have any reading books at home, please ensure that these are returned to school so that we can reallocate books for the children to bring home once more. Please bear with us as it will take a while to get all books back in, give them period of time where they are untouched and then get them back out to the children.

## **Interactive Zoom Sessions**

Details of the Interactive Zoom sessions offered to each year group for next week, will be sent out via ParentMail by Mrs Stein later today. You will be able to see the timetable for the week, enabling you to plan accordingly.

Next week's sessions will also include a 'we are going back to school' small group catch up designed to help support the children's wellbeing in returning to school. Many of the children will be excited about coming back but some may have worries or questions about it. These sessions will be led by the children's own teacher or teaching assistant. We would strongly

encourage all the children to join these Zoom sessions which may help to manage expectations and feelings about returning to school.

### **Inter-House Quiz**

Thank you to everyone who took part in our Inter-House quiz over half term. The answers are now on the website so you can see how you got on.

We had just over 70 families take part, ensuring that lots of points could be earned for the different houses. We have split the Reception points over the 4 houses as the children have not yet been assigned to a house.

The points are as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place – Walmer with 230 points
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place – Rochester with 210 points
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place – Dover with 150 points
- 4<sup>th</sup> place – Leeds with 140 points

Congratulations to everyone who took part and especially to those of you in Walmer.

### **Remote Learning Achiever's Assembly**

The last Remote Learner Achiever Assembly will be on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March at 2 pm. The parents of those children who have been chosen will be notified later today with the details of how to join the meeting.

Once all the children return to school, we will resume our usual Thursday celebration assemblies. STAR awards will go on hold until the start of term 5 when we will once again be able to hold our weekly tea parties.

### **Grand Designs**

Thank you to all the children who came up with such amazing creations for our Grand Designs Day. I was immensely impressed with the designs and models produced. We have enjoyed looking at the photos you have sent in and will get some of these up and onto the website as soon as possible.

## **Loan of a School Laptop**

Those families who have been loaned school laptops can hold onto them until the end of the loan period which is Thursday 1st April. We will remind you nearer the time about the process for returning these to school.

## **Latest Government Guidance**

The latest Government guidance on Coronavirus can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson, has written an open letter to parents about the return to school on the 8<sup>th</sup> March. This can be found via the following link:

[https://dfemedia.blog.gov.uk/2021/02/23/an-open-letter-from-education-secretary-gavin-williamson-to-parents-carers-and-guardians/?utm\\_source=24%20February%202021%20C19&utm\\_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm\\_campaign=DfE%20C19](https://dfemedia.blog.gov.uk/2021/02/23/an-open-letter-from-education-secretary-gavin-williamson-to-parents-carers-and-guardians/?utm_source=24%20February%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19)

Alongside this the DfE have updated guidance on what parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm\\_source=24%20February%202021%20C19&utm\\_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm\\_campaign=DfE%20C19](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm_source=24%20February%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19)

Thank you again for your continued support. It is very much appreciated. If there is anything that we can help with, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Take care and stay safe.

Kind Regards

Jill Talbot