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Wednesday 1st April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

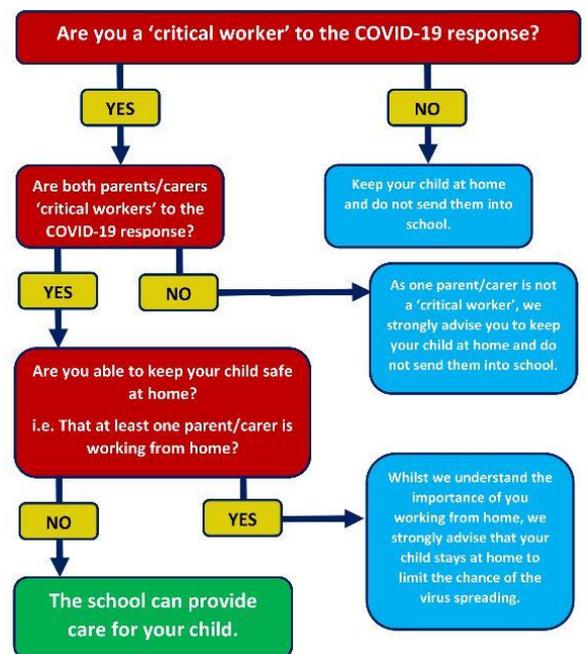
This week we have been working on what ‘school’ will look like after Easter. It is becoming increasingly apparent that things will not return to ‘normal’ for a good while yet. We are making our arrangements on the assumption that school will not be open until after the May half-term.

COVID-19 Update

Whilst the country is on ‘lockdown’ the government guidance remains that all children should be at home unless they cannot be safely looked after. The school will provide emergency childcare for identified children and these families will continue to be contacted on a weekly basis to determine their childcare needs for the coming week. With NHS shift patterns and the like, I know it’s not always possible but please can the Google Form be completed by 9am each Friday so that we can plan for the coming week. If there are any changes, then please email me directly on headteacher@bridge.kent.sch.uk

I have had some queries this week on how I make my decisions about which children should be in school and which should not and I wanted to share a flowchart (*right*) I have been using.

Ultimately, every child in the school increases the risk to the children to have to be in school, to the staff and to their families. I have a responsibility to them all to keep them as safe as possible. If someone contracts COVID-19 whilst at school, I would feel responsible. I also would not want to be responsible for bringing COVID-19 into my own household and putting my daughter at risk – I know that this is something every parent can understand.



Educational Provision

As I mentioned in last week’s newsletter, the most important thing you can do with your children is daily practice of Spellings (using Spelling Shed) and multiplication tables (Times Table Rock Stars) alongside Reading. I’ve been tracking the league tables on Spelling Shed and Times Table Rock Stars and will continue to post these on Twitter and Facebook.

Miss Allison and Mr Taylor have also put together some ideas on Reading which will be sent out alongside this newsletter – this advice can also be found on our [School Closure: Home Learning](#) page.

Please also keep an eye on our [School Closure: Web Links](#) page on our website for home-learning activities, which we are continually updating.



Starting after the Easter break, teachers will also be setting optional English and Maths activities each week. **I would emphasise that these are optional, so please don't feel pressured into completing them.** These activities will be emailed out to parents and information placed on our [School Closure: Home Learning](#) page.

Free School Meal Vouchers

The government have this week announced the national scheme for those families eligible for Free School Meals and we will be contacting these families directly.

Please note that this is only applicable for families who are eligible. It does not apply to Universal Free School Meals for all Key Stage 1 children. If you think you are eligible then you need to apply.

More information can be found here: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/free-school-meals>

Emailing Staff

During this time, it is important that links are maintained between school and home and whilst many of you have been in direct contact with myself, there will be times that you may wish to contact your child's class teacher in regards to the learning activities that have been set.

I would like to take this opportunity to outline the school's email protocols so you are clear what to expect from us and what not to expect.

In order to ensure that staff work-life balance is maintained, staff are free to check their emails at a time which suits them and their preferred working pattern and it is expected that emails are replied to within a 24 hour time period, even if it is simply an acknowledgement and promises a later reply.

Staff are not expected to check emails outside of working hours, at weekends or during school holidays. Details of staff individual email addresses will be shared in the first week back after Easter with details on home-learning.

Year 6 Residential Trip to PGL

We have been in discussions with the PGL centre and they have offered to change the date of this visit to the second weekend in July (Friday 10th to Monday 13th). Obviously there can be no guarantees but we have accepted this date as it's the best chance we have of the trip going ahead.

I know it's a lot to ask, but please could you continue to make payments – if this trip does not go ahead, monies will be refunded.

Year 5 Residential to Bore Place

Sadly, we have had to make the decision that we won't be able to take the Year 5 children to Bore Place. We did look to reschedule this for later in the year but this wasn't possible. We are in discussions about how deposits can be refunded to parents and we will pass on any information we have as soon as we have it.

Easter Holiday

Whilst it may not seem like it, today is the last day of the school term. Never has a school holiday felt less needed however perhaps it is more needed than ever. I would encourage all families to 'ditch' the school work over the Easter break and focus on spending time together as a family. The next term will be a challenging one and none of us know what it will bring.

With best wishes



James Tibbles