



## Virus bulletin 4. Update for families

20.4.2020

### Summary:

Updates for the summer term

- Welcome back
- Lockdown priorities during Easter
- Online learning this week, marking, and checklists, teacher planning time
- Requests for childcare for people returning to work
- Thanks to Little Angels
- Stay safe as a priority!

Reassurances about priorities of safety and following government guidelines

Dear families,

Firstly, thank you for all the kind encouragements offered to the staff team at the end of last term. I know they were really touched by the kind words, from families and we are very much 'in this thing together' as we navigate our way through a very different route to what we had thought it would be this term. I hope you all enjoyed a Happy Easter, and that the Easter bunny was good to the children!

It has been hugely helpful, even during lockdown, to be able to release all our staff team to have some time away from their screens too so they could 'enjoy' a break from planning and marking, and allowing them time with family and loved ones. I hope as families you have all been able to enjoy a somewhat different routine which has been a bit more relaxed and without pressures of finishing school work on a daily basis. I'm sure you don't need me to remind you of the importance in these difficult times to allow children time to have fun! Time to cook or bake together, garden together if you have a garden, play together whether that's 'I spy' or board games or cards, as well as 'getting by' together. As my daughter told my son, 'By the end of this lockdown, what do you want to look back and say that you achieved?' While it's tricky at times 'getting by', it's important to try and make memories as much as you can too, even if it's just having sandwiches in the garden or on the doorstep for tea!

The rhythm of term time and holidays offers a regular break allowing children (and adults) time to chill as well as create some of their own memories. As we start the beginning of the summer term, I'm welcoming you back to an online learning offer rather than the usual new theme or topic launched by expeditions, visits and visitors. But we are still so proud of what the children, their parents, and our staff have achieved by working in close partnership on our carefully considered programme of online learning and I just wanted to highlight some of the adaptations we've planned for this next three weeks.

### Family learning timetables

For families this week there is a suggested timetable below when most classes will release learning onto the Seesaw app. Remember if you prefer to have your activities all in one go rather than staggering them to fit with the suggested timetable, then just miss a day and then you can use them all in one time the next day. Seesaw activities are offered as follows:

9.00 - 9.30 Read Write Inc or guided reading activities offered

9.30 - 10.30 Literacy activity

10.30 - 10.45 screen break

10.45 - 11.45 Maths activity

## **Marking**

**Teachers will start to restrict their marking/review times to the hours between 8am and noon each day.** This is so that they have uninterrupted time in the afternoons to manage the pastoral reviewing that we are required to do as well as to allow them important screen break time away from their screens.

Since the start of home learning, all staff log the number of times that each child in class completes their daily set tasks on Seesaw, and they also grade the quality of the child's work whether it's weak, ok or 'fab'. As senior leaders we have reminded teachers that the marking policy should give responsibility as much as possible to pupils to review their work. As adults if you can talk about the children's learning checklists this will help them to reflect on the quality of their work. The checklists have been amazing tools to support children to understand the learning they have completed so we want to continue to get this in place. Let your class teachers know if you have any questions about this.

**Wednesday morning this week** will continue to be a time when the staff plan and prepare - so they will only complete the Read, Write Inc phonics programme and the usual guided reading programme that day as individual teaching plans. The IDL programme of learning will also be available as it has been over the holidays.

**Fridays after 2pm school will finish!** Teachers will be released to support preparation and communication for the following week, so they won't be routinely expected to check any of the online arrangements, Facebook pages or Seesaw accounts.

## **Staff well being**

We are finding that the time it's taking to plan and deliver the teaching for Seesaw is a lot more time consuming. Talking through the slides, and giving explanations, recording them and then delivering any adaptations is difficult and very different to our usual preparation timings. It's important that staff have sufficient time and that they aren't overburdened. Thank you so much for your understanding to date.

## **Contact details for job changes or changes to needs**

This is a changing picture and we will be reviewing the situation every Friday as a senior team. Please contact the school on a new email address [jobchanges@villageprimary.org](mailto:jobchanges@villageprimary.org) by the Thursday of every week, so that on Friday mornings we can revise our critical worker needs. We will be prioritising those on the front line in the future.

Please use the email address above though to inform us of changes as we need one port of call to review.

## **Arrangements for care in school**

Both pupils and staff will continue to follow social distancing regulations throughout the day as listed on bulletin 3 to families. This is really important to allow us all to stay safe.

Please let us know if you are using school to care for your children and if your circumstances change.

**Government advice is that any child who can safely be cared for at home, should be.**

Your child, **even if eligible**, will **not** be able to attend school if they have a high temperature or a new and persistent cough, or if others in the family household are self isolating.

**PLEASE DO NOT ARRIVE AFTER 8.30am unless you have informed the school. We are running on a skeleton staffing arrangement and cannot guarantee that someone will be at the front of school all day to take in any late children.**

**If you only need the care for your child for part of the day please inform us as soon as possible so we can make sure that you can access the school building at the time you need after 8.30 or before 2.30 (KS1) or 3.30 (KS2). We may not have someone on the front desk at all times.**

### **Easter holidays**

A huge thank you to Little Angels who continued the routines we set up for the four or five children who required childcare for critical workers in the Easter holiday. We really appreciate the many meals Karolina and her team provided to children in our school community as well as the expert support they had in school, and we really valued the time off that their care allowed us to have.

### **Next week's online learning**

We'll inform you by Friday this week of the online learning plans for next week. There are some new online learning opportunities that have been published, (you may have heard on the news) both by the BBC as well as by a consortia of teachers commissioned by the government. If we feel they offer the quality we want for your children's learning, we may well consider using some of these for some of the classes next week. This will allow our teachers to join the majority across the country who appear to be working on whole school curriculum development, school development plans and preparing reports and other non class based documents that we are tasked to complete as a profession. It's testimony to our team that we prioritised children's learning first but if other options are of a good enough quality we may well trial them in some of the classes and seek feedback about their value.

### **Stay safe**

Good luck getting into the swing of online learning again. Please don't hesitate to let us know if you need anything using facebook pages, messenger or the school email account [info@villageprimary.org](mailto:info@villageprimary.org). I appreciate things can be tough for some families - and many of us, have been negatively impacted in some way, shape or form. Our online learning is important to provide the children with a routine, an expectation and a sense of safety. But it's not as important as you all staying safe, keeping even tempered as much as possible, and creating some of those special memories that you'll all remember. So let us know if things get to the stage where you are struggling. We really want to be able to help when we can.

Stay safe everyone!

Debbie Wylie  
Principal