



## Virus bulletin 5. Update for families

1.5.2020

### Summary:

- Safeguarding
- Next week's learning programmes
- Curriculum development and requests for a small group of parents to feed back
- Cancellation of Y4 Robinwood Residential, and Y5 learning expedition to London and refund arrangements
- Happy news: Our very own Little Inventor and IDL heroes!

Dear families,

And so we are in May! The days for us are definitely a lot slower and managing the school over technology at times has been soul destroying. Like many of you working from home, there is only so much time you can be on a screen before you feel demotivated and while virtual meetings held online help by seeing a friendly (usually!) face, it just isn't the same as being in the same room. As a staff team we decided we are all in need of a pick-me-up so we're working on a staff video to send around next week hopefully - watch this space!

### Safeguarding

A huge thanks to all the families who have contacted us, and responded promptly to any phone calls, messages or emails from school. It really has helped reduce our work when our contact efforts receive a prompt response. The government has asked us to be diligent with this - to ensure that we can offer support if and when it's needed. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you think it would help you to re-engage the children if they are starting to struggle with lockdown and home learning. Even if you too would like to chat through any struggles we have a solid network of support that we can either suggest to you or contact on your behalf.

I would like to extend a huge thanks to the team of staff who have unerringly made regular contact with some families, and who have been able to chat to the children at home to let them know how much we miss them and how we don't really like lockdown!

### Next week's learning

From next week we have decided initially **for one week only** to use our usual Seesaw platform to send out the government's Oak Academy learning which is tailored carefully for each year group. We appreciate that this will be a slight change from the usual learning offer over the 4 days of the school week, but we feel it's important to be able to release staff for next week to develop our curriculum keeping pace with the free time that many other school staff have had during lockdown. We will still be monitoring completion of these tasks and grading the quality of completion just as an aid to our welfare checks on engagement levels, as well as the opportunity to see if the planned activities generate as much enthusiasm as usual!

### Curriculum developments

We have a focus during 'curriculum development week' to further strengthen the progression in learning that each subject area offers the children at CVPS. Families will be able to overview this as all the 9 subject areas will be uploaded to the school website in the coming weeks alongside some overarching curriculum statements, and some visual diagrams that show the methods we use in our teaching. We'd love to take some feedback from families before we finalise the documents, so any parents who would be interested in reviewing the documents, please let me know via [info@villageprimary.org](mailto:info@villageprimary.org).

### Residentials - Y4 Robinwood and Y5 London

Governors met (virtually!) to discuss the issues with regard to the residential holidays planned. I have concerns about making plans and arrangements to take the children away without a clear picture of the risks associated with the venue, and the usual activities we would expect to undertake. At this point in time none of us are able to estimate the issues, and so **we have reluctantly decided to cancel the two residentials that were planned for the summer term**. We will be able to refund families for the full amount - and seek to claim from our school insurance policy for the deposits that we cannot reclaim from Robinwood. We recognise that some parents will especially welcome the refunds. Angela will be processing these directly into designated bank accounts so please can those who are owed a

refund in Y4/Y5 contact Angela on [angela.hall@villageprimary.org](mailto:angela.hall@villageprimary.org) and send through the bank account details which you would like the refund to go to.

I am very conscious of the disappointment this decision will cause our children but I would like to reassure them that as a school, I will do everything that I can over the coming months to ensure that all the children don't miss out on some of the significantly positive experiences that we usually enjoy through our extensive visit programme. However any arrangements must be regarded universally by myself, school leaders, staff and parents as safe to do. Sad times but necessarily maintaining safeguards to protect everyone.

### **Happy news!**

This week's great news is that we have learned that Ethan Vaughan who won the 'Little Inventors' award for his amazing 'Power of Poo' creation, has been working closely with a student from Northumbria University student, who is bringing Ethan's idea to life as a 3D animation, to be presented in an online exhibition. The exhibition will have its own website and each idea will be featured, including the Pioneer's original drawing, samples from the Inventor's log, a short video about each child including the interview filmed at Preston Park in January, alongside other content and, most importantly, the idea brought to life. We are so proud that Ethan's creation has been recognised for its innovative approach to energy saving and we can't wait to see the outcome online!

Across IDL sessions (independently accessed by the children) we are very proud of those children who have achieved so many successes. In some Louise Tweddle - our lead for the IDL programme has created a bit more recognition of the huge efforts of some - in excess of 600 sessions for some children in a week.

In order for the content of each IDL session to offer sufficient challenge, the children must take their time answering their questions accurately. If they make any errors, the difficulty levels will not ramp up and the work will become too easy.

### **Staff news**

Today we welcome a new business manager, Kerry Warren to our team. We are delighted to (finally) be able to release Angela Hall to spend more time in a new role the school has identified as being critical, as marketing, technology and administration manager. We are very conscious that these areas currently don't receive the attention they need when they are critical to the school's future. We are delighted to be able to create the role to strengthen the school's position in the community.

Kerry joins us from a successful position as business manager in another Northumberland school where she worked for the past few years after qualifying in accountancy and working in an accounting company prior to that. She is very excited about the new challenges and can't wait to meet everyone once we can get closer to 'normality'!

We really appreciate families' patience when the technology doesn't work and for letting us know as soon as possible so we can either reset systems, offer new logins, or inform the software companies. I think if anything the new home learning arrangements have helped prove all round - is that there is no **real** replacement for good quality face to face teaching. The emotional connection and relational approach to how we usually do school has been hugely missed, both by staff and children. We are as desperate as I know many of you are to get back to a more normal school and we are all looking forward to hearing next week's pending announcements about the planned gradual lift of lockdown. We are told that we should have more time to consider the planning phase for a return to school, and will of course let you know in due time of our interpretation of that in the days after.

Stay safe everyone and enjoy a well earned screen break if you can over the weekend!

Debbie Wylie  
Principal