



## Virus bulletin 7 Update for families

11.5.2020

### Summary:

- CVPS response to government announcement
- Update on learning programmes
- Reminders about half term dates and new info uploads onto CVPS website

Dear families,

Thank you so much to all families from Y1 to Y6 who have been working through the past week on the Oak Academy learning programme while staff at CVPS focus on some curriculum development work including the usual REAL planning days for next term's curriculum. We really appreciate that it's been trickier than it was previously, and for most hopefully it's reinforced how fortunate our children are at CVPS to have the online offer they have had. Sometimes it's not until you have something taken away that you realise how valuable it really is - and this has been the case when I've read some very frustrated posts from families and heard from other parents, from the unofficial facebook posts too. When I review the Seesaw posts that the staff have created with individual children as well as the whole class teaching posts, I'm just so proud of the love, care and attention they give to individual children at CVPS. We do it as we know our children (like so many nationwide) have struggled being at home, missing their friends and school and missing us and the routines, we give them as a spur to inspire their learning. So in summary - I know many of you will be delighted today that this week our online learning programme will revert to that planned prior to last week. And the CVPS staff team will deliver online teaching through both Seesaw and the Tapestry pages for EYFS children.

Some comments have suggested that CVPS should be prioritising our children during the lockdown, but it is **because** we are prioritising the children that we have felt the need to take last week as an opportunity to plan. Quite frankly what most other schools (for the whole of lockdown) have been delivering in terms of online learning was offered as the replacement. It's only a few comments, but hurtful nonetheless to all the staff at CVPS who give 110% as most of you appreciate. As principal at CVPS I feel fiercely protective of each and every member of staff in our school who show professionalism at every level. They have never ceased to prioritise the children, putting themselves at the forefront of meeting their many needs, dealing with illnesses and suspected COVID-19 outbreaks prior to lockdown with not one complaint, and working harder than ever during a time when many in their roles across the country have had an easier time. Social media can be a positive when managed carefully, but please remember before you post that if you wouldn't say it to someone then you probably shouldn't post it. If there's one thing lockdown has been a pain about - it's that sense of isolation for everyone, and a limit on the encouragement that a passing smile, or a short sentence can offer. They just don't really exist in the same way anymore.

We fully appreciate from reviewing beforehand, Oak Academy learning programmes (although fully endorsed by the Department for Education having been especially commissioned), are not as effective as our own at CVPS. We are proud of the online learning programme that we have delivered at CVPS and we know that CVPS has been pretty unique as a primary school in our region offering bespoke learning to our children. Oak Academy is not perfect, but a good second best though and something we will signpost you to, during the forthcoming half term break when our teachers take another well earned screen break.

### Prime Minister's announcement

We listened expectantly to the Sunday evening announcement and heard at the same time as the rest of the country that it is expected that after half term, all other things being equal, **Reception, Year 1 and Year 6** children will return to school. Assuming that the younger children struggle most with online learning and that Y6 pupils need to have some regular contact with school to be able to prepare for their transition to secondary school, we will work over the coming days to create a safe and secure plan to ensure social distancing can continue - alongside the care of the current 22 children who attend school and come under the critical worker/vulnerable children criteria.

The hygiene arrangements we have in school have been successful to date and given that a return to full school numbers is not imminent I am confident that these robust arrangements will suffice for us to continue. There is a rigid focus on regular handwashing, social distancing and raised awareness of slight changes to children's physical

presentation which necessitate immediate exclusion and isolation according to government guidance. The only likely change will be the social distancing arrangements at lunchtime which to date have been manageable but with two extra classes in school, we are likely to use the classroom spaces for eating at lunchtimes. Thankfully the summer weather allows us a lot more opportunity, hopefully to be outside a lot more which will definitely be easier.

Having reviewed situations in other countries who have successfully returned to school recently - a zoned approach, keeping children and their staff in teams, separated from other teams (to limit any cross infection of suspected cases of COVID-19), will ensure the sustainability of the school's staff team. We will necessarily be reviewing the current three week rota of staff and working to create these separate zones in school, while allowing sufficient teaching staff to continue the online learning offer for Nursery children alongside Y2-Y5. The curriculum will give more time to physical activity as we are very aware that children will have not been exercising as much, and will have been eating more at home! (like most of us adults too!)

We will continue the current arrangements which are in place until the 8th June which is the end of our typical school half term with a similar arrangement to that in Easter for those who require care for their children due to their critical care needs.

### **Half term at CVPS**

And finally before I sign off for this bulletin, I'd just like to remind everyone that CVPS has half term at the usual dates set in the school calendar from Friday the 22nd May and we will return, welcoming back Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 on Monday the 8th June. (Details of start and finish times and arrangements for drop off and collection will be shared in the next bulletin.)

We were pleased to discover on the announcement yesterday that from Wednesday the 13th May families will be able to enjoy taking exercise and using the outdoors in their family units, for extended times. Being allowed to play sports as a family, and to take picnics and visit special areas in the outdoors like beaches and other spaces, will hopefully give parents a much needed outlet for the children (and their parents!) to expend some of that energy pent up for the past 7 weeks! So while we will signpost those of you who wish to complete more learning online to the Oak Academy there will be no expectation that you are online. **It would be good to continue with reading at home though**, and any work on IDL should help to keep minds active as opposed to computer games which should always be managed carefully in terms of time limits referencing government guidelines again!

We appreciate that some families with children who have at least one parent who is a critical worker, might need to request childcare for their child as and when they return with the gradual return to work being announced. Please continue to contact school by email on [jobchanges@villageprimary.org](mailto:jobchanges@villageprimary.org) if you wish your child to be considered for a place. Decisions for the following week are made on a Thursday, with confirmation sent over on Fridays. If there are insufficient spaces then we work with the local authority who have a responsibility to confirm spaces available at other local providers. We expect that there will be less capacity for additional children to join once we start next half term due to the addition in school of the three additional classes.

It's a bit late (sorry!), but I'm asking Angela who is in charge of the school website to upload all the family bulletins sent out previously (alongside any other COVID-19 information) to a new section on the school website. Hopefully it will put everything into one place to make it easier for parents to reference as and when needed. Check out [www.villageprimary.org](http://www.villageprimary.org) when you get a chance.

Stay safe (or should I say 'stay alert!') everyone and I'll be in touch before Monday next week with an update in the run up to half term and new arrangements for those coming back to school after half term.

Debbie Wylie  
Principal