



Woodside Junior School

Headteacher Mrs Dorota Milner



Mitchell Walk, Amersham, Buckinghamshire HP6 6NW

Tel: 01494 725897

Email: office@woodside.bucks.sch.uk

Website: woodside.bucks.sch.uk

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Dear Parents

I sincerely hope that despite all the uncertainties, difficulties as well as real hardship for some families, you managed to have some resemblance of Easter break and were able to spend quality time with your nearest and dearest – in person or through virtual means. Certainly, this glorious weather, that we experienced, helped to lift spirits up. I cannot believe that the summer term is truly here, as it seems only yesterday we were applauding Year 4 during their Christmas performance. For all of us here at Woodside, it is a very sad start to the term as we are not able to greet our pupils in person but only through virtual means. I am sure that most of you are aware of a variety of speculative articles in the national press with regards to the opening of schools. I would like to reassure you that nationally Headteachers have not been informed about any possible dates, as yet, so at this moment we will continue with our virtual teaching and learning. There is a lot of information coming out of the Department of Education directed at the schools, where some of it may be of interest to parents. I will pass on any relevant information as it is available so my apologies in advance for any increased number of letters, notices or circulars.

Progress Reports

We will be sending a short report this Thursday (via Dojo) to all parents informing you about your son's / daughter progress up until the school closed. Please liaise with the class teachers if you have any further questions to ask.

Survey

We are enclosing a link to a very short survey to all parents asking for your feedback relating to Google Classroom. We would be very grateful for your response as it will help us to improve this particular facility. Many thanks in advance. Please use the link below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FZ2X2S3>

Curriculum

Our termly letters to parents will be sent next week. We will give a more detailed summary of the curriculum to be covered during this term with some additional suggestions for resources that may help parents and pupils.

Resources

The BBC has today launched an education package across TV and online, featuring celebrities and teachers, helping to keep children learning at home and supporting parents.

BBC Bitesize can be accessed here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>



On Line Safety

The BBC reports that TikTok, a social video app that allows users to share short videos, is introducing a family safety mode designed to give parents tighter control over how their children use the app. The safety feature will allow parents and carers to link their account to their child's and have direct control over the safety settings.

Read the news story: ***TikTok 'family safety mode' gives parents some app control***

Released today: A free information book explaining the coronavirus to children, illustrated by the Gruffalo illustrator, Axel Scheffler.

https://nosycrowcoronavirus.s3-eu-west1.amazonaws.com/Coronavirus_ABookForChildren.pdf

I know life must be incredibly hard for you at this time. I imagine by now you have already found your own excellent ways of coping during this pandemic but I came across some information that I would like to share with you below. I do apologise for stating the obvious and I hope that you will not find it patronising, but the information and ideas come from real people who have to self-isolate for a living. People who work on polar expeditions, oil rig workers as well as astronauts - all choose to live away from people and society and therefore have had to develop ways to survive and stay sane.

Establish a consistent routine and structure to your day and week

This will help give you a sense of control and help limit any feelings of uncertainty as your day progresses. Try to make the weekends feel like a weekend by doing different activities i.e. because it is Saturday go for a different walk or eat something a bit more special or play only a certain game on Sunday afternoons.

Look for positives in each day and think rationally

Celebrate any little wins you have each day because this will lift your mood. Try not to dwell on things you cannot control. Maybe have a break from watching the news which can be daunting and overwhelming.

Break down tasks into manageable chunks

Try to focus on what it is really important, achievable and immediate. Concentrate on completing tasks that you can complete or can be done in the next hour, day or week. This will help give you a feeling of accomplishment.

Be creative

Pursing a hobby, reading, listening to music, playing cards, cooking or exercising are great ideas to help you relax and recharge. Staying away from screens and social media will also help you relax.

Self – talk

Meditating, doing yoga, breathing exercises and visualisations will all help regulate your breathing and help you feel less stressed and give you more personal control. There are lots of ideas on YouTube.

'It is OK not to be OK'

Remember it is normal for our moods to ebb and flow and it is perfectly normal to have good days and bad days. Try to acknowledge the progress you make and the 'little wins' you are achieving by having a celebratory meal or sharing your good news with your wider friends and family.



Find a passion project

Give yourself a different sense of purpose by taking up a new skill or an online course. This will help with any feelings of monotony and boredom and help keep your spirits up. Making candles or soap, growing seeds or drawing or sorting out the old photo albums can help alleviate boredom whilst also cheering you up.

Journaling

Some people find writing a diary really helps and writing your thoughts down each day can help you process what it is happening by simply putting pen to paper. Find the same time each day to write, with a pen that feels comfortable in a place in the house you feel most relaxed. Sometimes when we write, our writing can end up turning into stories or interesting reflections; be proud of what you have written, no matter how short and try to share any writing you are proud of.

Self-restraint

It is hard being cooped up in a confined space so it is important to practice being tolerant of others. Try to practice tolerance of others and practice self-restraint. Thinking twice before saying that one thing you know in hind sight might upset someone. Find a little part of the house which you can claim as yours; a little personal space to retreat to even if it is just an armchair with a book you are trying to read or where you sit to text your family. Remember it is OK to have an honest and open conversation with your loved ones. Sometimes these conversations can help resolve a problem before it begins.

Social Messaging

Be wary of messaging and video calling platforms. Decide between you and them when it is a good time to call and what it going to be talked about, and remember you can always 'mute' conversations so you don't have to see the notifications.

I'm sure after reading these ideas, you will be pleased to know that you are doing everything you can to keep yourself happy and positive.

We wish you all a peaceful start to the new term

Kindest regards from all the Woodside Team

