



### Weekly Newsletter

[admin@the-grove-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@the-grove-primary.devon.sch.uk)  
<http://www.the-grove-primary.devon.sch.uk>  
[www.facebook.com/thegroveschool](http://www.facebook.com/thegroveschool)

**Headteacher: Hilary Priest**  
**Newsletter No: Spring 3**

**Telephone 01803 862018**  
**20th January 2021**

Dear Parents and Carers,

#### **Change to attendance for Key worker children – immediate effect**

If you are key worker parents and your children currently attend school, we are reversing the decision to have them in school full time. This is a decision based on trying to reduce numbers in school for staff and children safety. On days that you do not work you MUST keep your children at home and complete the home learning with them. Learning is a continuous process and it is important to at least do the daily maths and literacy tasks so that you child can follow the next day's learning. Please could you provide evidence of your working days and your roles so that we can ensure this is being followed. You can send this to [admin@the-grove-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@the-grove-primary.devon.sch.uk)

Vulnerable children and children with EHCPs can continue to attend but this can be full time or part time as you wish.

#### **Plea for kindness**

Thank you to everyone who has sent positive messages of support – we do really appreciate it. It has been a difficult time in school as I'm sure most of you can imagine. It is very stressful, and we are finding that we are inundated with emails and messages, and trying to respond to them all promptly is very challenging, and often needs to be done in our own time.

We do appreciate feedback and updates from you and the children, but can I remind you to please take care of the tone and the affect it may have on me and my staff. We are working in a high risk and very demanding role, and doing everything we can to support the whole school community. We have 4 members of our school who currently have Covid and are really very poorly, which adds to the anxiety. We do understand that many of you are finding the combination of home learning and home working very challenging, but it is important that frustrations are not taken out on us as a school.

We did not make the decision to lockdown the schools again, and the guidance from central government and the local authority has been very unhelpful. This has meant that we have had to make decisions on a local and school level that you may not agree with, putting the school's viewpoint at odds with your own. Our priority is to keep people in our community safe and to prevent them from getting this horrible virus. All of our decisions have been made based on our school risk assessment which is regularly updated, and serves to prevent transmission in school while also ensuring that we can support all children who need to be on site – you will, I hope, see how these two aims are in conflict.

Please note again that we do have a parent code of conduct and if we feel that emails are insulting, debilitating or aggressive we will pass these onto the Chair of Governors. This is our standard process for complaints or where we feel that as employees we have been treated unfairly. As an example, emailing staff on a daily basis, especially on weekends, is unacceptable.

My staff and I are finding this time very challenging. We are trying to cope with teaching children remotely and in school, alongside our own personal anxieties and worries, and while managing our own family situations. If you have a concern we will always help you with it, but please be mindful that we also need time to have some headspace away from the school.

It doesn't take much currently for us to be overwhelmed with emotion. Our mental wellbeing is so very important – and it is on us all to support this, no vaccine is needed to help with our mental health - simply kindness.

Please take care of us as we continue to take care of you.

### **Home learning help line phone calls**

If you would like to talk through home learning, expectations and difficulties with a mind to finding practical solutions then Mrs Wilkinson and I are happy to give you a call back. Please email me at [head@the-grove-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:head@the-grove-primary.devon.sch.uk) and one of us will get back to you as soon as we can.

### **Weekly fun task**

Bake-off cooking task –

1. choose one thing to bake that you all like to eat eg a type of biscuit
2. each find a different recipe for this bake eg from a book, from different websites
3. each cook the bake following the recipe (with support from adults where needed)
4. either choose a separate judge, or decide to all taste and mark (choose your marking system, ranking entries or marks out of 10)
5. eat all the rest of the bakes!! (in moderation obviously!!)

Post your photos on seesaw/Tapestry.

Good luck!

Kind regards

Hilary Priest