

Dear Parents,

I just I'd write a quick message to keep you all updated. It is now technically the school holidays but the school has remained open to the children of the key workers, many of whom are working on the front line and helping to keep the NHS going at this critical time. The children that have been coming in are having very unusual school days but they are safe and happy whilst their parents are doing their bit.

For those of you that are not classed as key workers or who are but have chosen to keep your children safely at home, thank you for all that you are doing. By staying home and not mixing with other friends and family, you too are doing your bit and it is this that we really need to happen to stop the spread of this nasty virus. Please keep following the advice from the authorities and we will help stop the spread.

The teachers initially provided the children with a pack of work that was designed to last about two weeks. We have been setting work on Google Classrooms and we will be contacting you further when we are ready to roll it out. As previously mentioned, it is currently the Spring break so please enjoy this time and don't worry too much about trying to home school at this time.

We have been asked by a number of parents if we can do some online lessons using Zoom or other meeting apps. Unfortunately, this is not something we have been advised we can do safely especially as most staff will not be in school. For parents desperate for their children to see their friends, I suggest maybe you can supervise your child to see their friends online. Could some of the parents in each class set this up rather than doing it through school should you wish to do so?

We are also aware that people's circumstances are changing quickly. For anybody who is eligible for free school meals, the Department For Education will be providing supermarket vouchers that can be spent on keeping children fed whilst school is closed. You can very quickly check if you are eligible by clicking on this link <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims-wirral/> and completing the online form. You will need your National Insurance number to do the check. Free School Meals is not the same as the universal grant that currently pays for children in F2, Y1 and Y2 to have lunch at school each day. It depends on the individual circumstances of the parents. Even if you don't think you will be eligible, it will be worth checking and also it will continue to check automatically in the future and will kick in if your circumstances change.

We have asked parents previously to complete this Wirral online form. If you have already completed the form and then your circumstances change, the system should recognise this. Approximately 60% of current parents have previously checked online. Should you become eligible, we will automatically be informed and then we can set you up to receive the vouchers too.

Finally, can please pass a message to all our children from all the staff here at Heswall?

"Dear Children,

School is missing you all so much and we can't wait to see you all in the future but only when it is safe to do so. We are all okay and we hope you are too. Keep yourselves busy, keep reading and doing your work when you can. We wonder if any of you will learn some new skills in this time? Some of you may learn to draw pictures, sing songs, play a musical instrument, do some yoga or even write a quiz for your parents to answer. We wonder if anyone could learn to juggle - that would be great in the next talent show! There's a challenge for someone! School is definitely not the same without you but we know that for now, we all have to stay away until things are safer. Take care, be nice to your parents and your siblings if you have any and be the best you can be. #betterneverstops."

Best Wishes,

Mr J Lawrenson
Headteacher
Heswall Primary School