



Lockdown: Information to Parents/Carers

Wednesday 20th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that you and your families are keeping well. Once again we find ourselves having to adjust to the difficulties and restrictions another national lockdown brings. Every family situation poses unique difficulties whether you are a key worker and your child is in school or you are taking the challenge of home schooling once again (and perhaps trying to work too). I just wanted to reassure you that we are still here to support you in whatever way we can. Over the next two weeks school staff will be telephoning families so do watch out for withheld numbers because it may be one of the teachers or TAs trying to contact you.

Coronavirus update

It was inevitable, but this month we have had our first positive case and a small number of our school community had to isolate. Other staff members and children have also had to isolate due to close family members testing positive for the virus. At present, we are still in a position to be able to continue offering critical worker provision and remote learning to those children at home.

January	Number
Positive cases	2
Staff having to isolate	6
Shielding staff	1

Our risk assessment has been fully revised to take account of the new lockdown measures and government guidance. Once fully approved by our Governing Body this will be placed on our school website.

Critical Worker and Vulnerable children

The safest place for children and families to be at present is at home with as little social contact as possible. These emergency critical worker places are intended for families who have no other adult at home or a support bubble to look after children and who are immediately required in the response to this virus. Thank you to our families who are only using this provision when it is absolutely necessary.

Keeping rooms well ventilated is advised to minimise the Covid transmission risks in classrooms. For this reason windows and internal doors are open. If your child is attending school, I would recommend that you “layer” them up with a vest/t-shirt and provide an additional item of clothing that they can wear on top of their school jumper.

Remote Learning

Firstly, I would like to give credit to our Black Horse Hill Infant school staff. They have worked incredibly hard over the past few weeks to learn new skills (mainly IT) to deliver a strong home learning offer to our children. We have found the positive comments from parents uplifting. If you do have any positive feedback regarding our home learning offer then we would appreciate you letting us know. Equally, if you have suggestions on how we can improve our offer then let us know that too! Communication is key to us getting this right.

The high levels of engagement with remote learning has been impressive. Staff are reporting that lots of work is being submitted to See-Saw and Tapestry. One member of staff shared that they had received 174 pieces of work in one week across the class. Amazing! With this level of response I am sure you will understand that not all pieces of work will be marked to the same level. Staff will prioritise marking to focus on developing the children’s key knowledge and skills. Try to only submit work that has been set.

Just a reminder that the learning is sequenced carefully to build upon the lesson before so it is important that children complete work in the correct order.

Finally, if you are finding the home learning difficult to complete, we understand. The government have asked us to set a minimum of three hours learning for pupils. If at all possible prioritise your child’s reading and phonics ensuring that they read their Bug Club book daily.

Zoom

What good fun our class Zoom sessions were last week! A large number of children engaged in the sessions as did dogs, cats and even chickens. Unfortunately, our internet at school did let us down and for some classes the chat was repeatedly frozen. Our school IT team have been trying to resolve the issues so we hope that there will be an improvement this week.

BBC

Many of you will have seen this advertised but just in case you haven't.

Starting on Monday 11 January, each week day on CBBC will see a three-hour block of primary school programming from 9am, including BBC Live Lessons and BBC Bitesize Daily, as well as other educational programming such as Our School and Celebrity Supply Teacher and much loved titles such as Horrible Histories, Art Ninja and Operation Ouch.

You can find the BBC schedule via this web link <https://bam.files.bbci.co.uk/bam/live/content/z3xq8hv/pdf>

Free School Meals

From Monday 25th January children eligible for free school meals will receive a voucher instead of a food hamper. The school office staff have been in touch with the relevant families to organise this.

Nativity DVD

As you are aware, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, we were unable to invite parents in to watch our class Nativities last year so we arranged to have a whole school nativity filmed and parents were able to purchase copies of the recording. A net amount of £422.82 was raised and our School Parliament decided to split the proceeds between our school fund and Claire House. A cheque has therefore today been sent to Claire House for £211.41.

The current lockdown has meant that for a short time we have had to focus our attention on ensuring that school is safe for critical worker/vulnerable children and that those at home can continue with their education. School improvement is still a priority for us and we are totally committed to addressing the areas identified in our inspection despite the challenges the pandemic presents. I will be in touch soon with updates on how we are doing this.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Morris
Headteacher