

18th January, 2021

Coronavirus - COVID-19 – Remote Learning Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your families are managing to navigate positively through these first few weeks of lockdown 3.

Thank you for all the support you are providing for your children to access the digital learning we are delivering to learn from home. We know this can be challenging, particularly where you are juggling your own work or supporting a number of siblings. We are here to help, so please don't hesitate to contact class and head teachers. You can also contact us via enquires@bridgeschools.co.uk.

As you know, we have children on site as well as learning remotely. Can we please remind critical worker parents the safest place for your child is at home and to only take up a place on site if you have no other options available to you. This will also support our staff to successfully manage learning for **all** children. Children working on site and at home will be provided with identical work to ensure equality of opportunity.

Remote Learning

Overall, things have gone well so far, and we have most children accessing remote learning every day. The expectations on schools for remote learning have been strengthened by the government through the Department for Education, we now have a duty to ensure your child engages daily with learning. Teachers need to see what your child has completed and will be contacting them/you by phone/text/email/TEAMS if we do not hear from them. We still have a duty of care for all our children whilst they are learning at home. Please contact school for any help or use support from our COVID page available on our websites. We may be able to help you.

We will provide a range of engaging learning activities to support children throughout the lockdown. Work will be uploaded regularly and may include live lessons via Teams, lessons recorded by the class teacher, lesson videos (such as Oak Academy or White Rose Maths), independent study opportunities, worksheets, or use of platforms such as Mathletics/My Maths.

Online Safety

Please read through these key points which are vital for us to ensure that we are continuing to work together to keep our children safe whilst learning online. They are in addition to the guidance you have already received (parental guidance for video calling, online safety policy, and the home/school agreement)

- We are now recording some live lessons. This will provide you with a back-up of the lesson in case you missed it or need to listen to something again. The call will be kept on the TEAMS page, so that it can be accessed at home, and at school for 20 days and then deleted.
- Your child may be invited to join an extra group (we call them intervention) which could take place with a teacher or TA, this will also be recorded. You will be contacted, should this be the case.
- All 'chat' and language/behaviour on TEAMS is to be in line with classroom expectations, using a school email account (to ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring software is enabled). We are using TEAMS as a learning platform. Should your child wish to call or chat with children outside of these lessons, please make alternative arrangements, do not use Teams for this purpose.
- All staff/children/governors/trustees have Bridge Schools email accounts and we act as one large organisation. Therefore, your child/ren will be able to access email addresses for other people outside their school, but who are known people to them from Bridge Schools Trust. We have the expectation that children will act appropriately when contacting others.
- No unauthorised or 'guest' adults or children are to be invited onto the platform.

- Cyberbullying or antisocial behaviour of any kind will not be tolerated
- There should be no inappropriate content on any of our video calls. Please contact the school if you are concerned about any of the content of the video call.

It has been a difficult time for everyone with lockdown being announced one day into term, but we have switched as much of our delivery as we can to an online platform. We have been able to order over 100 iPads through the government scheme for children to access digital learning in school. We will be ordering a further 100 iPads to add to this to ensure there are sufficient devices in school but also to loan to children at home who do not have a device or are sharing devices with siblings. If you are having difficulty in this way, please contact your child's school and we will see if we have devices available for you to use at home.

Free School Meals

As you will have seen, the issue of FSM has been in the press recently. Many of our schools use Caterlink to provide meals for your children and they have recently released a statement regarding the 10-day food parcels they provide (please see separately attached information). From 18th January, national vouchers will be available to families in the same way they were previously via Edenred. Your schools will be contacting you regarding whether you wish to receive food parcels or vouchers from the national scheme.

It is a little annoying to hear in the press that schools are closed! We have 30-50% of children attending the majority of schools. Teachers and teaching assistants are managing learning for those in school and delivering the same content online for those learning from home.

Just as I have said in previous letters, access what you can to support children but please do not let learning become a focus of stress in your family, there is plenty of that at a difficult time without us contributing to it. If you are struggling with anything that you think we can help with, please contact us. It is important that we are in contact with the children and know that they can access and benefit from the learning school staff are providing.

As ever, thank you for your support. I hope everyone continues to be well.

With all good wishes,

Adrian Massey and everyone at Bridge Schools.