

THE LEYS PRIMARY and NURSERY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

30 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have been thinking about our pupils and their families all week as these are challenging times for all of us. However we know that Lockdown is the right decision to reduce the spread of the virus.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE FOLLOW GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES:

Stay at home

Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)

If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times

Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

It is heartening that people far and wide are coming up with some creative ways of keeping our children fit, healthy, entertained and educated at home. We know contact with family and friends (via the internet) will help. As a school we are also responding to the challenge of educating our pupils at home - so we will be sending out a weekly newsletter during term time to keep you up to date.

UNDERSTANDING CORONAVIRUS for pupils

We understand that our pupils will still be finding it difficult to understand the gravity of our current situation. Although they may have heard the news - different organisations have created videos and powerpoints that you could watch with them so that you can answer any questions.

The **Children's commissioner** has created a powerpoint:

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/cco-childrens-guide-to-coronavirus.pdf>

Newsround is another great resource, where our pupils can keep up to date with up to date age-appropriate reports

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

COMMUNICATION with parents and carers, and pupils

- **Due to the Lockdown the school office is closed**, however the admin team are working from home and checking the school email daily. You can still contact any member of the school team through admin@leys.herts.sch.uk
- Text messages/emails will still be sent out through **Schoolcomms**
- Teachers will use **Marvellous Me** to make contact with you. If you don't have access to Marvellous Me please let them know through emailing the admin team.
- **Pupils can email their teachers through the Google classroom Y1 to 6**
- **This week your child's teacher is going to telephone parents/carers at home** (please note that the call will come through as **No Caller ID** to protect their data security). We want to see how you are managing with home learning and checking that your child can log into Google classroom. Any to just say Hi.
- **For Nursery and Reception classes teachers will use Tapestry to stay in touch**
- **School newsletter - sent out weekly**

KEY WORKER PROVISION

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- Our approach is to ensure ALL pupils are at home with a parent carer, as we know this is the safest place for all. We have been making provision for a small number of our pupils who qualify under key worker provision - according to government guidelines! We want to help but also keep our staff safe.

HOME LEARNING TIPS

We are currently developing a page on our website for Home Learning, and we have created a Parent Help Sheet to help you with Home Learning tasks. We have tried to give as many ideas of our own (and other schools) as we can, to lighten the load. This will help so please read!

- Some good tips that have come from other teachers/parents are; **work for one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon**, take turns to work with the children and don't expect to do too much. Remember we are due an Easter holiday at the end of this week so the children might be quite tired.
- A school day is not as intensive as working at the table at home. We have playtimes, practical activities and lessons start with activities on the carpet in groups. The children also move to different locations for other lessons such as PE, music and computing lessons, which breaks up the day. Letting your children still have time to play and to go outdoors is very important. They also need some time to relax and occupy themselves for a while. This is good for their imagination, independence and probably your own wellbeing!
- We need to be aware of the amount of time children are using a screen. For this reason, we have tried to avoid sending a long list of websites or to introduce online learning. The children already have Purple Mash, Spelling Shed and Times Tables Rock Stars. Young children still need to use their fine motor skills, have opportunities to communicate and to be as practical and physical as they can.

TEACHING and LEARNING

Teachers have already sent home a list of **websites** that each year group can access from home. However there are a whole host of websites available for pupils to use while they are at home, and there are more being added to the list every day. Teachers will add useful sites for your pupils on their Google classroom.

Week 1 and Week 2 (this week)

- Teachers have sent home work in Learning packs - this should be worked through until completed.
- Teachers have been setting up Google classrooms/(Y1-6)Tapestry(EYFS) and adding additional tasks that the pupils might also complete. This will be added to ongoing.

Weeks 3 and Week 4 (Easter holidays)

- Teachers may use Google classrooms(EYFS)/Tapestry (for EYFS) to suggest activities to get involved in over the holidays

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Weeks 5 and 6

- We have purchased learning packs (CGP) to support home learning which will be available to pupils after the holidays (and hopefully Lockdown). Teachers will use their Google classrooms to share learning ideas/powerpoints/videos/resources to support them with these tasks. Project tasks (learning across the curriculum) will also be available.

Reading at home

Please encourage your children to read books they have at home. They can also read online, Reading Plus (KS2) and Reading Eggs (EYFS/KS1). Yesterday Amazon cancelled all subscriptions of books and audio stories for children of all ages as long as schools are closed. Children everywhere can instantly stream an incredible collection of stories, including titles across 6 different languages that will help them continue to read and listen to.

<https://stories.audible.com/start-listen>

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/books/>

YouTube channel

We are creating our own Youtube channel for pupils to access. Staff will be uploading videos for pupils to access. Watch this space!.

Maintaining positive mental health

Please access the range of resources available from

www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk. There are a range of resources and ideas to support families through this difficult time.

There are also a range of ideas from

actionforhappiness.org : They have produced a COPING CALENDAR: Keep calm, Stay Wise, Be kind <https://www.actionforhappiness.org/coping-calendar>

www.youngminds.org.uk have also produced useful guidance and resources for parents and carers to access

https://youngminds.org.uk/media/3702/how-to-support-your-child_corona.pdf