



## Newsletter Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020

### **MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD**

As I write today's piece I'm conscious that in the diary for this week were scheduled the New Intake Parents' Meeting, KS2 Sports Day and the first induction slot for the children due to start in Reception in September. Obviously, all of these events have had to be cancelled or postponed. School at present feels extremely different to how it normally is as we enter the last lap of the academic year.

You will no doubt be aware that the government has this week made several announcement of intentions regarding schools. At the moment, these have not been underpinned with any guidance for those in education, so we are unable to make any hard and fast plans that we can share with you. For what it is worth, however, here are my thoughts - but they will almost certainly be proved to be wrong when official guidance is issued.

Further Re-opening. This week we were told that schools that have capacity (after Reception, Y1, Y6 and Key Worker children have been accommodated) can admit pupils from Y2 - Y5. We are currently running a bubble system which sees us using 10 out of our 11 classrooms and all members of staff who are not currently shielding. This week has seen more than 90 children accessing the bubbles each day. Consequently, the children in Y2 -Y5 will not be admitted before the end of this academic year. I realise that for several families that we have spoken to, this is a situation that is far from desirable. Mr Bradley will be outlining in this newsletter the plans for trying to maintain engagement for the two thirds of pupils that are currently not in school. However, can I encourage you to contact him directly - or your child's class teacher - if there are issues to do with how to support your child at this time. We have been able to offer telephone conversations with children and print off packs of work for families that need this facility. We fully realise that this is a poor substitute for being in a classroom between 8:50 - 3:20, but would ask that you bear with us as we try to offer a range of learning activities to those who want them.

This week has also seen an announcement of Free School Meal Vouchers for the summer holiday. Again, this has not been addressed in any great detail yet, however I suspect that it will mean a resumption of the Edenred scheme that the school was accessing during the time when the kitchens were closed. We will contact the families that this applies to when we know more.

Finally, we do not know what the future intentions for schools are. However, we are currently thinking about the new academic year. I would like to believe that we will be able to reopen to all pupils in September as scheduled. This, however, will depend upon many factors which are all out of my control. Be assured that we will do all that we can to accommodate as many of our pupils as quickly and as safely as we can. Thank you to

those of you who have expressed gratitude for the efforts that we are making. This is an extremely difficult time for everyone and we are trying our very best to do what we can for our school community. As always, things are better when we stick together so that our children can "Learn with Love and Flourish in Faith."

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### **UPDATE FROM MR.BRADLEY**

It has been great catching up with so many parents and children over the last couple of weeks. I am always amazed at how resilient our children are, and of course, we are not underestimating the job parents are doing at home at the moment juggling home life, work commitments, school work, house challenges, the Wi-Fi connection and not forgetting the dog! Quite often the comments went along the line of 'well, we are doing our best and making the most of the situation...' and we are trying to make that a little bit easier.

We sent a text message out on Thursday highlighting the chance to access a range of ebooks from the Oxford Owl website. The link is here:

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

Parents can register for free, and then access hundreds of ebooks to be read on devices of your choice. On the school website, on the weekly tasks page, you should find a list of these ebooks that are linked to the Accelerated Reader programme, so children can read them and still take AR quizzes as usual. Hopefully, this might help offer new momentum to home reading!

We will continue to promote the White Rose maths programme, as this is a programme we follow closely in school when things are 'normal'. There are one or two alternatives as well, though, with the Oak National Academy providing good video lessons that might offer an alternative. Obviously, Mathletics is wonderful, with children still earning gold certificates in the usual way, and being celebrated on the school website. Please contact school if 'log ons' fail or go missing! [cbradley@chur-ascen.dudley.sch.uk](mailto:cbradley@chur-ascen.dudley.sch.uk)

Finally, we are in the middle of plans to offer some sort of drop in scheme utilising the playground space. We envisage opening the school gates regularly for parents and children to pop in to collect reading books and to tell us what you have been up to. Hopefully, this will help to lift enthusiasm and maybe inspire children working at home to keep at it! We need to collect some resources together that we can offer out to children and also look to a quarantine system to ensure everything is safe, but hopefully we will kick off these sessions next week...watch this space, or rather your mobile phones for a text!

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### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

If you have changed your address or contact details, please email Mrs Reynolds on [creynolds@chur-ascen.dudley.sch.uk](mailto:creynolds@chur-ascen.dudley.sch.uk) with your new details so we can update our records.

Thank you.

## **FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

Just a reminder that if your child is currently in Year 2 and therefore moving in to Year 3 in September, they will no longer be entitled to Universal Free School Meals and will need to pay for meals via the Eduspot system.

You may be entitled to Free School Meals; see below for the criteria and all the information you need to apply online. Even if your child is currently in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 or starting in Reception in September and you meet the criteria below, **you should apply** for free school meals so that your child continues to be eligible once they reach Year 3.

## **FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

If you receive any of the following support payments your child may be entitled to Free School Meals

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit Run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

If you currently receive free school meals but have now moved into the area, you will need to complete a new Free School Meals Application form

If you wish to apply for Free School Meals, please go to

[www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/your-council/council-tax-and-benefits/benefits/free-school-meals](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/your-council/council-tax-and-benefits/benefits/free-school-meals)

If you need further information, you can contact the Free School Meals Team by:

- Visiting – Dudley Council Plus, Castle Street, Dudley  
between 8.30am and 5pm Monday to Friday, 9am and 12 noon Saturday
- Email – [freeschoolmeals.benefits@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:freeschoolmeals.benefits@dudley.gov.uk)
- Telephone -01384 814988

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