

21 January 2021

Dear Parents & Carers

Thank you

First of all, I would like to thank and commend you for stepping into the breach yet again with providing support for your children during this third lockdown. I am overwhelmed with the time, effort and enthusiasm you are investing in your children. The teaching team at school have been most impressed with the children's responses to learning, their enthusiastic attitudes when attending Teams sessions and their submission of work, all under your guidance - we applaud you.

As I have said in previous letters, there have been some issues with the remote learning and we've all been on a very steep learning curve – staff, pupils and parents. The juggling of school work, caring for children, sharing of devices and managing your own jobs cannot be underestimated and believe me we do not! I would like to express my gratitude for your efforts in motivating your children and congratulate you on the wonderful job you are doing.

I would also like to reassure you that we understand that every family situation is different and therefore managing learning at home is a different experience for each and every one of you. This current situation is hard on you all and we appreciate this. Please, please do not think you are not living up to expectations if not every piece of work is completed each day. As I said, it is very hard trying to fit an almost impossible job around all of your other commitments.

Although we are timetabling as many opportunities for children to have teaching, via either teams or recorded sessions, we know that for some families your schedule may not work with our timetable. Many of the activities can be done at a time that suits your family. Please don't worry if your child can't attend every Teams session. Try to fit in opportunities for learning around what your family can manage. Also, remember that children are taught in a classroom along with 30-ish peers, so the focus from parents at home may be overwhelming for both of you. Be kind to yourselves, if things are not working out take some timeout. Remember at school children have time to play and interact with others. This is equally important whilst at home too, even more so at the moment. Doing activities together that you enjoy as a family are just as important and these are the times your children will remember when looking back.

Support for Families

We are continuing to support families with the provision of free school meals packs and vouchers, as of next week. Staff have been busy delivering learning packs and food when they have been needed. We are also continuing to support as many families as possible with the provision of laptops and iPads, and have taken delivery of another batch of laptops this week. We will be contacting parents over the next few days regarding allocations for home use.

If you need any help accessing support or are experiencing hardship whilst your children are at home, please contact school. We may be able to help or signpost you to other agencies for support.

New Resources

One area of remote learning we have wanted to develop is children's access to books whilst at home. We have recently subscribed to Oxford Owl e-library where children can access a large number of

Oxford Reading Tree books (including chapter books) covering all of the primary phase from Year 1 to Year 6. Your child's class teacher will be in touch soon regarding their log in if they have not already done so.

Please see the parent's information leaflet attached with this letter and the link below.

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

Learning Packs

We continue to provide learning packs for children each week. These are placed outside the main reception door in clearly labelled boxes for you to collect if you are unable to print resources at home or prefer a pre-printed pack. There is also a box where you can return children's completed work which is then quarantined for three days before being passed on to class teachers. Please ensure the work is clearly labelled with the child's name and class.

Finally

I would like to express how extremely proud I am of the whole team at Heronsgate. This includes teachers, the admin team, the site team who help to keep our school safe, and our learning support team. As teachers, we are all dedicated to do the very best for the children of Heronsgate and I am overwhelmed with the hard work and resilience they have shown when once again being asked to deal with new and frustrating situations. Staff have worked tirelessly, each day, into their evenings and at weekends to ensure the children have access to a range of opportunities that include Teams sessions, recorded lessons, and activities across the curriculum through Showbie. They are planning, adjusting and delivering the curriculum whilst also teaching the children in school.

They are also spending time each day contacting parents and children making sure everyone is safe and well and offering support where they can. Staff are doing an amazing job ensuring children who need additional support continue to receive it, responding to individual questions, emails and feeding back to the children throughout the day. Our learning support assistants are also very busy doing an excellent job working remotely with individuals and groups of children.

I could not have asked for a better team of people to work with during this extremely difficult time. We truly are a team at Heronsgate. We have received many e-mails from parents thanking the teachers for all they're doing, these messages brighten up their days and are very much appreciated so thank.

We really miss the children who are at home; school is not the same without them and we look forward to celebrating the day when we can welcome everyone back into school once again.

Keep safe and well.

Kind regards



Jane Edwards
Headteacher

Headteacher: Mrs J. Edwards B.A (Hons)
Deputy Head: Mrs C. Gardner-Potter B.Ed (Hons)

Chair of Governors: Mr K. Gowans
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