



BROAD CHALKE C. OF E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

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23rd March 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic continues to grow exponentially. I'm sure that you may be feeling rather overwhelmed at the moment as you try to balance family life, professional life and your responsibilities as a member of the wider community. We all also have to adjust to the enormity of what we have to do in order to follow the latest government advice and what this means for you in your particular circumstances.

At school, we have obviously had to make massive changes too both in our personal lives and professionally. I'm so proud of our staff team for how they have responded to this challenge. Please bear with us as we learn to work in new ways using new systems, not helped yesterday when the internet crashed at school!

Childcare in school

The Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson, said, **'you should only send your child to school if you have to, because your work is critical to our COVID-19 response. If you are able to keep your child at home, you should.'**

I am very aware that school staff are being asked to put themselves at risk. Children are generally asymptomatic so we may not know if they have the virus. We are proud to support the keyworkers but please only use our service if you absolutely have to.

We have to insist on children keeping 2m apart from one another and whilst we are keen to get children outside, we will not be allowing them on the play equipment.

The virus has brought monumental change to how we teach and care for children. The virus presents a particular challenge for a lot of younger children as they adapt to new social distancing measures and forms of learning.

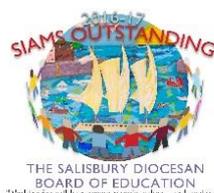
Home Learning

I hope you all had a good first day at 'home school'. I know it's a daunting prospect but I have every confidence in our parents to make this work!

The class teachers will send an email by **9.00am** every week day. They will try their best to respond to questions but please do not send them more than one email a day. The teachers who are able to be **in school are on a rota for child care of keyworkers at school** so they cannot answer emails immediately. They will get back to you when they can, after their work shift. The rota has to be flexible to respond to needs, normal staff illness as well as staff needing to self-isolate so I can't tell you which teacher will be in school on which day.

We are not able to provide a full curriculum with all the normal levels of differentiation to suit every child's ability. The teachers are trying the best that they can to provide what can only be a core offer of education; parents are very welcome to supplement the core offer of home learning according to the needs of their own children. Please find attached 3 lists of websites from Wiltshire Council with further ideas.

The best thing that children can do during school closures is **read, read and read!** Share stories, read non-fiction, look things up online and talk with your child about what they are reading.



This is not an academic emergency for your children, they are all learning under similar circumstances. A routine and timetable are important to give structure to the day. But what your children need **more than anything at the moment is your love, your patience and for you to show them how we grow through times of adversity.**

Now is not the time to stress about your child's learning. Enjoy your time together, outside if possible. Learn about nature, build a den or bake a cake (if you can get any eggs and flour!).

Animation & Story Book Explaining the Coronavirus to Children

This story book and activity are useful to support parents to tackle misinformation and help children understand Coronavirus.

<https://ineqe.com/2020/03/20/animation-story-book-explains-the-coronavirus-to-children/>

Questions about school closure

If you have any questions about the closure of educational settings, then this document may help:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

This extraordinary time...

We are in an unprecedented place. I am thinking of all of you, aware that some families are ill, some families are worried about relatives, jobs and money and stressed by trying to create a new normality. We are all going to have to work hard to face what is literally **the challenge of our lives.**

But it is a temporary situation – please hold on to that. We don't know when it will end but what do we ever really know about what the future holds for any of us? We are getting used to a new normal, not a normal we would choose or want and parts of it are going to be undeniably tough but we have to make the best of it. As I said to the children in my final celebration assembly- we have to focus on the positives and even in the most world changing time there are positives if we look hard enough for them. It is also a time when we need to hold on to our school core values more than ever.

Learning - we are all finding new ways to learn and appreciating that learning opportunities can be so wide even from within the confines of our own homes.

Caring – never before have we seen such care going on in our communities

Growing – we grow not when our lives are easy but when we are presented with challenges.

Sharing – we all need to think about how much we need and to leave enough for other people. Some of us will also have the gift of time to share life as a family in a way which is entirely new.

We may have time to reflect, time to focus on what is really important, time for our families, time to think about our world. Reflecting on how fragile our world is makes us appreciate it more. We have an opportunity to change even though we wish it was not happening. We may find ourselves doing what we should always have done - focus on what's really important, focus on the moment, focus on the people who need us the most.

I know that this is even more of a challenge if you, like us at school, are also keyworkers and that your work prevents you from being at home with your families. If you are staying at home then please do so with committed acceptance and know that this will save lives. Even if you don't want to do it for yourself, know that you are doing it for others. **If you are a keyworker then you have the admiration and respect of us all.**

We will find our way back to normality.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Amanda Brockway
Headteacher

