



Westerton Primary Academy

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The Leodis
Academies
Trust



17th April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers and Colleagues

We hope this letter finds you well and that you have had an enjoyable Easter with your families. Despite the closure, it has been brilliant to see all the Easter activities and updates on our home learning platforms. So many of you have been showing your creativity and community spirit which has given our teaching staff a real lift! We are, of course, all missing your children a great deal.

School provision update

We are about to enter our fifth week of school closure and we continue to be hugely grateful to all parents for their efforts during this difficult time; whether balancing the expectations of employers with childcare at home, performing key duties for frontline services or supporting vulnerable family members or residents in the local area. We would like to thank you for continuing to follow social distancing guidance, which in turn will lead to schools opening again as soon as possible.

While the weather remains warm, our group of children and staff in school have been making the most of the outdoors where they can by keeping the school garden in good health, visiting the wildlife areas and even creating a huge aerial "Thank You" to our amazing NHS using the recently mowed grass on the field!

Criteria for critical worker provision

We have had a number of queries relating to key worker status and the school childcare provision. We continue to keep the number of children in the provision to an essential minimum in line with government advice on social distancing. This means that, unless both parents are performing front-line duties and have absolutely no option for childcare e.g. responsible older siblings, or have been identified by the school as vulnerable, a place in the provision is not guaranteed. This will remain the case for the duration of the lockdown.

Home learning

Thank you to our extended admin team who have now distributed all the Seesaw codes via text, email or ParentPay to families with children in Years 1 to 6. We have used the most up-to-date contact details to do this, so please check your spam / junk folders for any codes if you believe you are yet to receive these. Any missing codes can be provided by contacting Mr Pool at poolt01@westerton.org.uk.

There continues to be brilliant interaction between our children and staff in Foundation Stage using Tapestry, with Victor the cat turning into somewhat of a local celebrity!

Staff in KS1 and KS2 have been working in staff teams to provide weekly tasks which will begin Monday 20th April and thank you to staff for their lovely responses so far to our pupils. Tasks will be updated on a weekly basis and we encourage your children to respond to these using photos, videos, voice-notes or using the tools in Seesaw itself if they are feeling ambitious. While we anticipate many children will enjoy

completing the tasks set, they are not compulsory and parents should not feel under pressure to provide a 9:00 – 3:15 schedule.

Reception National Offer Day

Thursday 16th April was National Offer Day for children starting in Reception from September 2020. If you have applied for a school place, you will have received an email or letter confirming the offer from the Local Authority. As our school office will remain closed during the lockdown period, please contact office@westerton.org.uk to accept any places.

Nursery places

Nursery admissions paperwork for September 2020 is due to be returned to school by Monday 20th April, preferably posted through the letterbox outside the school office. Alternatively, this can be emailed to office@westerton.org.uk.

Westerton Kids Club

For the duration of school closure, Westerton Kids Club will remain closed and we are unable to take bookings for September under the current circumstances. For any queries, please contact the Kids Club separately at kidsclub@westerton.org.uk.

Free School Meals criteria

During these difficult times, we thought it may be helpful to send a reminder of the qualification requirements for Free School Meals. Throughout the school closure we will be supplying those families who qualify with vouchers to spend on food and when school re-opens the Free School Meals will continue (subject to entitlement) with lunches supplied by our school kitchen. Please make us aware of any changes to your circumstances so we can provide this support as soon as possible.

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of 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 apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

Your child may also get free school meals if you get any of these benefits and your child is both:

- Younger than the compulsory age for starting school
- In full-time education

If any of the above benefits apply to your family circumstances, it is very important that you submit an application for Free School Meals.

A few extra thanks

We were delighted with the news of a healthy new baby from one of our families and a huge thank you for the large number of baby items that were donated. We understand that mum is now home with her happy and healthy boy!

Another thank you following the appeal for stair-gates. We have now received these and will be providing to one our families in need. We know this is just a small part of the huge community spirit shown across our local area at the moment.

We will continue to provide updates on a weekly basis but, for now, we would encourage you all to continue following government advice, stay safe, stay apart but do stay in touch with friends and loved ones to promote wellbeing in any way you can.

Yours faithfully

The Westerton Staff Team