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English Martyrs Catholic Primary School
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Dear Parents/Carers,

This has been such a whirlwind week! Thank you all for your patience and support.

You will no doubt have seen the news reports about the tragic events in Emmer Green this weekend. Our hearts go out to the families involved and the community at Highdown School. The Educational Psychology and Mental Health Service have put together an information leaflet on talking to children about frightening events (attached with this letter), which may be helpful to you.

In common with most schools, we have significantly higher numbers of keyworker and vulnerable children in school than during the previous lockdown – 140 children both yesterday and today.

In March we had an average of 25 children each day who were able to stay together as a group and the national curriculum had been suspended, which gave schools much needed flexibility at a time of huge uncertainty and disruption.

This time around, there is a strong emphasis on the need to minimise the number of contacts any individual has with others in school, to reduce the risk of infection. This is similar to the summer, when we had lots of small self-contained bubbles, but not all year groups were eligible to be back in school.

Our “partial opening provision” going forward includes every year group and we need to keep each bubble group in school (including their staff) separate from other bubble groups while providing as full a curriculum as humanly possible for the children at home as well. This is a HUGE logistical challenge (especially for those staff who are normally part-time and/or have several different roles in school) and I am incredibly grateful to our staff for all their hard work and dedication in the face of understandable anxieties.

We also have a number of staff (teachers, admin and support staff) who are unwell, recovering from illness or isolating which makes things even more challenging.

We have today made the decision that it is acceptable for children in the Keyworker/Vulnerable groups to come to school ONLY on the days you actually need the provision – so, if you are only working Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, it is acceptable for your children to remain at home with you and use the remote learning resources on Thursday and Friday. This will help to keep group sizes manageable and that will, in turn, make it easier to provide class teachers with the time they need to support the children who are currently learning at home.

If your child is part of the partial opening provision, we will send you a Google Forms link so that you can notify us of the days your child(ren) will be attending.

If you find that you no longer need the partial opening provision because you are able to care for your child at home using the remote learning resources, please let us know straightaway.

The remote learning work provided will mirror the in-school curriculum as closely as possible. This will include some pre-recorded video lessons, either in-house or from the schemes of work we use in school or other high quality resource providers. We will also endeavour to provide some live sessions where possible, although this is subject to staff availability. Sessions will be recorded for safeguarding monitoring purposes. Key Stage leaders will be monitoring children's engagement with remote learning each week and will contact you to discuss any concerns. If your child would prefer a paper pack, please let us know.

Further information about the expectations for remote learning will be coming out very soon.

You may have seen the news about mobile phone networks providing increasing data allowances to help families support children with remote learning. Schools can apply for this on your behalf if you do not have fixed broadband at home and cannot afford additional data for your mobile devices. To take advantage of this offer, please complete this Google Form <https://forms.gle/TEjr6HDT5qik6KGB6> – we need your name (not the child's name), your mobile number, your network provider and whether you are PAYG or Pay Monthly.

At the moment, the following networks have signed up to the DFE scheme – more may come on board, so please do fill in your details, even if your provider is not yet listed.

- Three
- Smarty
- Virgin Mobile
- EE
- Tesco Mobile
- Sky Mobile

A number of families have enquired about laptops. The portal for primary schools to order laptops from the DFE is currently closed, as they are focusing on provision for secondary schools, but we have been told it should open "soon".

If you have an X-Box or a PlayStation 4, these have an internet browser which can be used to access Google Classroom. The following links and checklists give more information about how to do this.

<https://sway.office.com/kaOyFbKLeluliOWf?ref=Link&loc=play>
<https://youtu.be/zcrseadEJoM>

Xbox

- 1. Plug a keyboard in to the Xbox USB slot**
- 2. Go in to my games and apps**
- 3. Find Microsoft Edge and select**
- 4. Go to: <https://www.google.com/>**
- 5. You can then access your work through Google Classroom. You can also access the Google Suite (including Google Docs, Google Slides, Google Meet etc).**
- 6. To move around you use the Xbox controller or plug in a mouse**



PlayStation

1. Identify the PlayStation internet browser icon (it is WWW with dots around it)
2. Press the PlayStation logo on the controller
3. Go to the library and find options for games and applications
4. Go in to applications and you will find the internet browser
5. Go to: <https://www.google.com/>
6. You can then access your work through Google Classroom. You can also access the Google Suite (including Google Docs, Google Slides, Google Meet etc).
7. To move around you use the PlayStation controller or plug in a mouse



There won't be a "normal" newsletter tomorrow, as we are sending out so much other information at the moment.

Please take care of each other and follow the health and hygiene advice to help keep yourselves safe. These are incredibly difficult times for all of us, but the strength of our school community (on-site or at home) never ceases to amaze me.

If you need extra help with anything, get in touch and we will do our best to put you in touch with the people or agencies best placed to help.

With prayers and best wishes to you all,

Catherine Doberska (Mrs)
Headteacher

Let's do the **right** thing
for Reading

