



# Coleshill C of E Primary School

*Inspiring our children to flourish and enjoy 'Life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)*

## Happy New Year

Whatever the circumstances, we still wish you a Happy New Year for 2021; that it will bring a brighter future for us all.

While we wait in hope for that, we do face many challenges both immediately and over the coming half term.

We will cover some updates in this news letter, however advice is changing so rapidly currently please keep an eye out for updates (often delivered via ParentPay email) over the coming days.



## DfE Leaves Huge Challenges for Schools and Parents to Solve

**We are currently dealing with huge numbers of enquiries for many, varied and often complex requests and issues following the lockdown announcement on Monday night.**

**We are dealing with these as quickly as possible, however recent Government announcements appear to have misled parents regarding the resources (school places/laptops) that are available. This has understandably caused frustrations for parents.**



I am also deeply concerned with the draconian tone adopted by the government regarding home learning and the huge pressure that puts on parents. Please know that this is not and will never be our ethos and we will always look to support rather than penalise parents who are finding expectations overwhelming. For parents with more than one child at home this is particularly difficult. For you, the DfE's expectation for every child to be completing 3-5 hours work (new curriculum content not revision) will seem daunting if not completely unachievable. We understand this, and as we work through the current caseload of enquiries, we will be seeking to support and help wherever we can.



We will get through this period, however we will do it best if we work together. Please be patient in the short term. For example, the DfE have given us 1 laptop to loan out for every 32 children in school, so deciding on who has the greatest need from amongst the requests is a challenge. Using a first come first served basis does not ensure that those with the most need are supported. So we need time. The same applies to sorting out requests for places in school.

By early next week these issues should be resolved and we will have taken further steps towards Teams Classrooms teaching (see next page). The overall picture will begin to become clearer and new things (accessing and uploading work to Purple Mash for example) will have become second nature.

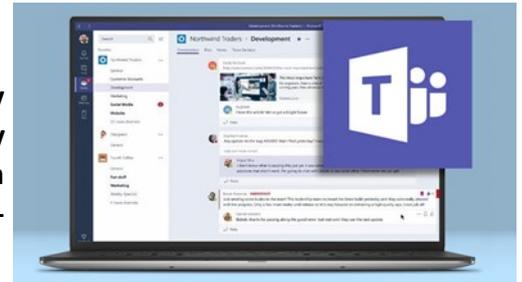
### Data SIMs

Vodafone have supplied us with a limited amount of data SIMs. These are free to those who do not have access to the internet at home. They have 30GB data which last for 90 days. If receiving one of these would improve your child's learning at home please contact the office to register a request.



## **Home Learning Via Streamed Teaching**

We are delighted that our Trust, BDMAT, has altered its policy position this week on the streaming of 'live' lessons. Previously the Trust has not permitted their schools to use live streaming on safeguarding grounds; however we have now been given permission under a strict set of guidelines.



It is important not to think of online streaming as a pacifier; to equate it to handing an iPad to a child in a restaurant to keep them busy! It will require lots of commitment, engagement and involvement from an adult in the house; however the benefits to learning should be excellent.

Before we can begin delivering lessons on-line, all parents will need to agree to our terms and conditions of use and partnership agreement. These include GDPR stipulations which by law must be positively agreed and opted into.



### **Why is there a need for protocols?**

Without protocols anything could happen. Imagine a scenario where a child might enter the virtual classroom in their pyjamas whilst lying on their bed without any adult supervision. Multiply that by the 40-45 children who are logged into that lesson and we have not got either a safe environment or one that is conducive to learning!

### **What will the protocols be?**

We will publish the full Protocol within a Google Form (we are currently waiting for confirmation of BDMAT's final protocols). At the end of the form there will be an agreement confirmation. The agreement will be in the same format as our current Home School Agreement.

We are very excited to be launching this new aspect of our home learning offer and believe that in partnership with parents this represents an opportunity to improve learning outcomes. As Rev Nick said recently about members of Coleshill church in his newsletter, know that, whether we are in school in person or not, we remain a precious part of one church school community; each valuable and equally important. We want, whether learning at school or at home, to reflect that vision.

## **Unhelpful Social Media Comments**

**My staff were quite distressed this week to stumble across Facebook comments from parents about our response to the Government's last minute U-turn. The midweek comments questioned our commitment to providing the best for our children and incorrectly claimed our support staff were at home and not working.**



I would like to commend my whole staff team for the phenomenal week's work they have conducted over the last four days in completely re-inventing the daily function and purpose of the school, yet again, without notice and under the shadow of an ever increasing and frightening pandemic.

I am constantly delighted by their willingness and ability to adapt when faced with new problems and they are determined to do the very best for your children. They will make home learning second to none.

Conversely, may I also thank those members of the school community who took the time this week to contact us and share words of encouragement and thanks to our teaching staff and those who support them.

## **Laptops for loaning**

As mentioned on the front page, we have a very small stock of DfE provided laptops which are for use by children at home who have no devices to access online learning.

These devices remain the property of the school and are given with a signed acceptable use agreement. We will be allocating these devices next week, therefore any requests must be submitted by 5:00pm on Monday 11th.