

# HARPUR HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY

Trent Avenue, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 9LP Tel:01298 23261



## NEWSLETTER

22<sup>nd</sup> JANUARY 2021

### HEADTEACHER'S UPDATE

Dear Parents/Carers,

#### **Thank you**

I would like to start my update by thanking you for your support so far this year. You will be pleased to know that since the latest lockdown was announced, things have settled in school and are running as smoothly as possible. Thank you for all you are doing at this time – supporting home learning, working in the NHS, and carrying out other critical work.

There has been no date given for the re-opening of schools to all children as yet. I understand that the government are reviewing the situation regularly, and will give us 2 weeks' notice to prepare for more children to return. The staff will continue to work hard to deliver teaching and learning for children at home and at school; I would like to reassure you that we will do our very best to support you and your family in the weeks ahead.

#### **Critical Worker and Vulnerable Children**

As you are aware, school remains open for vulnerable children and those of critical workers. It is important that we continue to keep the number of children and staff in school as low as possible. Having fewer people in school reduces the number of contacts in the community. The Department for Education advice states that children should stay at home where possible, and that children whose parents are critical workers should *only* attend school for the purpose of their critical work, when they have no other option of childcare.

This week, we have averaged 70 children in school each day. Thank you for helping us to keep numbers as low as possible. It will help reduce the transmission of coronavirus and allow all the children back in school sooner. You will have received an email yesterday with a link to book places for next week. If your work pattern or childcare arrangements change last minute and you want to cancel a place, or book in at short notice, just give us a call.

#### **Remote Learning**

Schools have been given detailed guidance from the government about remote learning, for example, infants should be set work to last up to 3 hours; juniors should have 4 hours. Children should be accessing either live lessons or video content, and work should be provided if families do not have internet access. We have produced a summary document outlining our provision – this can be found on our school website:

<https://www.harpurhill.derbyshire.sch.uk/downloadfile/16201717?open=true>

We are pleased that so many children are joining their class/year group in the virtual classrooms each day. We have received a lot of very positive feedback from families about the home learning – thank you. The teachers are pleased with the work being completed, and are grateful for the support you are giving to your children. The children are adapting to new ways of working in the virtual classroom; developing a range of valuable 'Learning for Life' skills – resilience, organisation, communication, and technology.

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We know that juggling your own job and children's home learning can be challenging at times, and I would like to thank you for everything you are doing, and also reassure you that we know you are doing your best. If you need help or extra support with anything, please contact your child's teacher and we will try to help you. Do what you can, don't worry if you can't, and please ask for help if you need it.

## Home Learning Agreement

Thank you to everyone who has read and agreed to the Home Learning Agreement. It outlines what we aim to provide as well as our expectations for your child and their learning, including online safety. Just to reassure you, we want the very best for your child and also want to ensure they stay safe online. There are a few families who have not yet signed up to this. If you have any worries or questions about the agreement, please get in touch with your child's teacher.

## Testing for Asymptomatic Staff

In the coming weeks, all primary school staff who are working in school, will be having a twice weekly coronavirus test. These will be carried out at home before they come to school. One in three people with coronavirus are asymptomatic, so this is a positive step for school staff and the community, and a useful tool in the fight against the pandemic.

## Finally...

I hope that you and your families are well. Once again, thank you for all you are doing. Have a lovely weekend.

Kind regards

Mrs Giliker

## THE LEARNING ZONE

Our school website 'Coronavirus homepage': <https://www.harpurhill.derbyshire.sch.uk/coronavirus> has links to other websites with activities and also free online books. Below are a few of our favourites:

- Book Trust have interactive books to read online, as well as story time videos and games to play:  
<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/storybooks-and-games/>
- Oxford Owl have free e-books:  
<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/find-a-book/library-page/>
- The National Literacy Trust have lots of activities for your child to do at home:  
<https://wordsforlife.org.uk/>

## TIPS FOR HOME LEARNING

Now we have been doing home learning for a few weeks, here are a few tips to help:

- **Take an active interest in your child's learning.** We have been doing remote learning for a few weeks now, and we know that there have been a few ups and downs along the way. Take an active interest in your child's learning and help support them whenever they need a helping hand.
- **Monitor your child's communication and online activity.** It's important to remind your child that despite being at home, the same level of behaviour and conduct exists as if they were at school. Encourage them to remain polite, remember their manners and not to post or send any negative comments just because they are behind a computer.
- **Establish a daily schedule and routine.** Get up at the usual time, following a 'normal' school morning routine e.g. breakfast, shower, get dressed. If you have more than one child, make a note of the times of the different live lessons. Try to stick to a daily routine and use the timetable/schedule to fit with everything that is going on in your home.
- **Have a place to work and equipment ready.** Make sure your child has somewhere suitable to work, such as a table or desk to write at. Make sure they have all their equipment ready – paper, pens etc (if you need any stationery, please get in touch with your child's teacher and we can arrange to get you whatever you need)
- **Set the ground rules and stick to them.** Working from home and trying to learn in a more casual setting that children might associate more with play and a degree of freedom might take a bit of getting used to. Come up with your own rules and schedule to suit your household – you may need a plan to share laptops between you and your children. Build in rewards e.g. when your school work is done, you can play...
- **Encourage screen breaks away from devices.** Remote learning will inevitably require more interaction with computers, laptops and tablets. Remember - children don't need to be online or on screens all day – teachers are setting a range of activities including PE, art etc. We have scheduled live lessons so there are screen breaks built in, but please check how much time your child is spending on a screen.
- **Check online safety.** Implement safety controls and privacy restrictions on apps and software. Ensure your child only uses official school communication channels. Talk to them about staying safe online and check they know what to do if they are worried or unsure about anything.
- **Stay in touch with school.** Contact your child's teacher if you have any questions or worries – we are here to help.
- **Be active and get fresh air whenever you can.** Encourage your child to be active as part of their day – teachers are setting PE activities such as Joe Wicks and Go Noodle. Go for a walk, ride their bike and play outside. Take lots of breaks.
- **Relax and don't worry.** If things become difficult, don't worry. Leave it and come back to it.
- **Remember:** you are doing your best and doing a great job.