



# Parent Link

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Dear Parents and Carers,

There has only been one topic that we have all been concerned about in the past two weeks, and that is the Coronavirus. By now you will be aware that all schools will be shutting at the end of the day today, and we are only able to offer a limited provision. As I write this we are in the final stages of setting this up for next week, and in doing so we have followed the guidance from the Department for Education. A link to this documentation, for parents and carers, is here:

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

The key messages are:

- If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.
- If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them.
- Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
- Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.
- Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.

The specific guidance in relation to special schools is below:

*We recognise that children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) and their parents and carers are facing numerous challenges as a result of coronavirus. We are encouraging local authorities to keep open both residential special schools and residential specialist colleges wherever possible. In addition, we want to keep the majority of day special schools and colleges open, including moving staff into these settings to avoid closure.*

*Special schools, colleges and local authorities are advised to make case by case basis assessments of the health and safeguarding considerations of pupils and students on an education, health and care (EHC) plan. For some, they will be safer in an education provision. For others, they will be safer at home. We trust leaders and parents to make these decisions and will support them as required.*

Whilst our capacity is somewhat limited by staff shortages, our policy has been to prioritise key workers, and our desire is to work with you to support you as best as possible. We strive to balance the need to keep children at home where possible, with recognising the additional challenges that being at home for extended periods of time with the children will bring. I was sorry to learn that parentmail crashed yesterday, but from now on we'll be putting all our information on the school website as well as through parentmail. As a minimum we'll be in touch weekly via letter, but we encourage you to have daily contact with teachers and the class team – that has been my message to them. We want to offer support where we can, so please let us know if you see a crisis looming, where we can we will attempt to offer at least some respite. There are a number of staff currently off due to self-isolation; they will come back at the end of the quarantine period which will hopefully positively affect our capacity. Equally there is the risk of further staff going off, following the government guidelines.

Can I offer my heartfelt thanks to so many parents who have been fully understanding of the challenges we are all facing. I do recognise how difficult this period will be for all of you, but I do pledge to do whatever we can to help each other. I also need to recognise here the wonderful work that our staff have done, and continue to do, with our deserving pupils at this deeply concerning time. I know they have appreciated your support too.

Bradley Taylor (Headteacher)

## News from around the school

### Rainbow

Thank you for the continued support you have shown my team. I know the last few days have been particularly challenging with changes to staffing etc and we are pleased to have been able to work with you to support the children and keep them in as much of their routine as possible. Packs have been created by the class teachers and should by now have come home. If you need any further help or support please contact your class teacher via dojo and we will do all we can to support you. Take care, Hannah

### Coppice

Over the last couple of weeks it has been a pleasure to watch Red Kite class and Squirrel class enjoying their cooking sessions with Chef Michael- we hope you have enjoyed tasting the yummy food sent home!

Deer class have been working hard in maths learning how to weigh objects using electric scales! Falcon class have had lots of fun at swimming this term, it has been lovely to watch their confidence grow! Salma

### Little Wings

Due to the ongoing concerns regarding Corona Virus, we have made the decision to postpone the Little Wings trip to Odds farm on 31<sup>st</sup> March. We have currently rearranged the visit to Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May however, should further updates be made, we will keep you informed. Many thanks for your ongoing cooperation, and we wish you the best of health at this difficult time. Please remember to keep in regular contact with class teams, and if you need a little extra help / advice at the moment, just ask! Claire

### Treetops

The last two weeks have been very manic with lots of uncertainty. The class teams have been trying to stick to routine as much as possible to ensure as little disruption as possible. I have a couple of website links that may be helpful if you are having to stay at home: [topmarks.co.uk](http://topmarks.co.uk), [helpkidzlearn.com](http://helpkidzlearn.com), [bbc.co.uk/teach](http://bbc.co.uk/teach), [crickweb.co.uk](http://crickweb.co.uk)

<https://www.autism.org.uk/about/behaviour/obsessions-repetitive-routines.aspx#routines> - this web link helps support with routine and behaviour should you be having to stay at home with your family. Stay safe and look after yourselves. David

### Woodlands

The Woodland Department staff are working to produce some home learning activity ideas which will be saved on the school website for you to be able to access from home. The activity ideas all include things you are likely to have around the house, and no special resources are required. We plan to keep adding more of these resource sheets to the website. Take care, Everyone. Amanda

### Gemstones

Ruby, Emerald and Sapphire class were very busy last week helping the Chiltern Rangers to develop the Gemstones Garden. They helped to plant some apple trees, Plant hedges and wild flowers. This should be a valuable space for us to explore the natural environment and provide us with wonderful learning opportunities. I hope that as the sun starts to shine we can all enjoy some time in school to enjoy it. We are trying to keep calm and carry on in Gemstones. Lots of brilliant learning is happening between the handwashing.

Look after yourselves. Sarah

### Support Staff

Interesting time..... This is where we excel, I cannot thank the non-teaching team enough for their hard work, diligence, patience, flexible approach and accommodating manor dealing with the situation with good humour and a smile. The front office team at both sites have been under siege with calls, queries and staff absences but still greet everyone with a smile. Andrew and Greg have kept the supplies of tissues, toilet paper, hand wash, paper towels and gloves going to all areas of the school. The finance officer for using her skills to locate the items we need and keeping the stock levels up. The kitchen staff have stepped up in support of the absent members of the team in their absence. Thank you again for all your efforts and the Chiltern Wood Spirit.



## World Book Day costumes



### Opal Class – Learning about fashion in Ancient Egypt

