



January 15<sup>th</sup> 2021

### **Snow**

Just to test us even further in what is a tricky time for everyone, we had quite a lot of snow on Thursday. I am grateful to the staff who managed to make it in, during what was a testing journey for some. The fact that we are in bubbles with certain staff teaching a particular class, complicated matters even further. We know that our critical workers are doing a superb job so felt that we needed to make every effort to support their work. The staff who live in more remote areas and were snowed in were still able to teach or support from home which would not have been able to happen this time last year!

I hope that all of the children managed to spend some time playing in the snow during their permitted exercise time!

### **Remote Learning**

As I mentioned last week, the teaching staff and I are very pleased with the participation rates of children accessing remote learning. Almost every child is joining with live or recorded lessons and submitting their work. Please contact your class teacher via their email if you are having any technological difficulties. Thank you.

I have been fortunate to see lots of examples of some brilliant home learning including nursery children making snow bears to link with their story, children using pasta pieces to support their Maths and many other creative ideas. Well done to you all!

Hopefully, many of the children at home will be engaging in the lessons and feel confident enough to share their answers with their class and staff. This will be good skill for children to develop as I imagine using and conversing via TEAMS or similar will become an important tool in the future.

### **Children entitled to Free School Meals (means tested not universal)**

There has been further guidance sent to school this week regarding children entitled to means tested Free School Meals. From next week, food hampers will be replaced with food vouchers until further notice. If your child is currently attending school, they will be provided with a school meal and you would not qualify for vouchers. We will send information to the parents/carers of children entitled to Free School Meals next week with information on how to redeem these vouchers.

### **Welcome to Mr Beadle and Miss Lister**

We have two trainee teachers with us for the next few weeks. Mr Beadle will be working in Mrs Leonard's class and Miss Lister will be working in Mrs Newton's class. This year's trainee teacher cohort will be the first year group to gain experiences of remote teaching and teaching in the classroom and I am sure they will learn a great deal. Good luck to you both!

### **Mental and Physical Health**

I hope that you were able to view Mrs Bartoli's assembly on mental health this week. Please contact your child's class teacher if you cannot find it as there were some useful tips shared.

Miss Richardson sent a message out via the app today around ideas to support physical health during this period. We know that mental and physical health go hand in hand and I hope that many of you are making the most of your permitted outdoor exercise or even exercising at home with Joe Wicks or other fitness experts.

### **Wraparound care**

Please use this only when absolutely necessary to allow staff the opportunity to plan effectively for online learning and for those children in class, as well as responding to your emails. Thank you.

### **Children of critical workers**

These children do not have to attend full time should parents work shifts or be on a part-time basis. Your children can access school on the days/times needed as long as we are made aware of this by email. If one parent is at home, please keep your child at home.

### **COVID 19 reminders**

During this period, please do not send your child to school if they are unwell in any way. Please continue to be especially vigilant around the symptoms of Covid-19. The medical advice is clear: you must self-isolate if you have coronavirus symptoms or live in the same household as somebody who does. The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If you or your household have any of the symptoms self-isolate and book a test. <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> has information about how to get a test.

### **Newsletters**

We will not be sending paper copies of the newsletter home. Newsletters will be uploaded on to our school website and on the app during this period.

### **Feedback**

If you have any feedback on how remote learning is working, please email [montalbo@durhamlearning.net](mailto:montalbo@durhamlearning.net)

### **Dates for the diary**

January 5<sup>th</sup> – February 12<sup>th</sup> School closed to all but children of critical workers and vulnerable children

February 15<sup>th</sup> -February 19<sup>th</sup> Half term

Mr C Minikin,  
Head Teacher