

12th February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I'm sure that you are aware that the school is closed for the half term break next week and there is the planned Inset Day on Monday 22nd February. Home learning will start and the school will re-open on Tuesday 23rd February.

At some point on the 22nd February, we are expecting the Prime Minister to set out the plan for what is happening to schools from the 8th March. After the Prime Minister has spoken, the relevant information will be sent to the schools. We will not be told anything ahead of the announcement and any information in the press and on social media before that must be treated with caution.

Once we have the information, we will make the necessary plans which will be communicated to you as quickly as possible. I would ask for your patience whilst we work through our arrangements; we are aware of the urgency in sharing them with you.

We are aware that this has been a difficult half term for many of you as you try to juggle home-learning and your jobs. The link below goes to a very useful presentation on how to support **your child's mental health**. It gives lots of strategies and reminds you to look after yourself too!

SUPPORTING THE WELL-BEING OF YOUR FAMILY DURING LOCKDOWN: [SaFe Parent webinar video AD from Schools Alliance for Excellence on Vimeo](#)

Please also see below **some ideas for the half term break** as we are aware that many of the usual holiday activities will not be available to you at this time. I hope that they help to break the week up.

Thank you to those of you who have completed **our Lockdown Learning questionnaire**. I will share the results of the questionnaire shortly, but we have been very heartened by your kind comments. The governors and trustees of the school are really interested in your opinions so the more responses we get the better. The questionnaire closes today.

Could I please remind you of the importance of **keeping your child safe online**, particularly in half term when they may be on their devices more and using different apps and websites.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online>

This document highlights the potential risks and gives practical ways of keeping your child safe. You would not allow them to wander off with a stranger to a place you have never been, so please apply the same care to their online activity. Children die due to online abuse.



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Miss Jolliffe enjoyed meeting with the Pupil Parliament this week and hearing our pupil's perspectives of lockdown and home learning. She was amazed at their insight and their ability to articulate their thoughts and feelings. She asked the children what they were worried about and they said two things:

1. **They are worried about falling behind in their learning** and I know that this is a worry for many of you too. Please reassure your child, and be reassured yourself, that we are already working hard to make sure we have a good plan for how to catch them up on their return. The lock down is national and everyone is in the same boat. We are looking at the key skills that they will need to move their learning on and they will be given priority.
2. **They are worried about another lockdown and the school closing again.** Avoiding another lockdown can only be achieved if we all follow the rules this half term. We are hearing from the children about play dates and visiting each other's homes. We are all missing our friends and family, but unless we follow the rules, the infection rates will not come down and the school will not be able to re-open. I'm afraid we all have to make sacrifices and it is hard, but your children want to come back to school and we want them to be here.

I really hope that the next time I write to you, it will be to share plans for the wider re-opening of the school. Until then, I hope that you are able to enjoy the break despite the restrictions; your children have worked very hard and we are very proud of all of them.

Kind regards

Sue Knight

Sue Knight
Head Teacher



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Half Term Activities

- Have a look at the PE blog for the 'Achieve 100' competition in honour of Captain Sir Tom Moore.

Miss Webb is recording an assembly to explain this further and **there are prizes.**

- Year 6 might like to take a virtual tour of Anne Frank's house in Amsterdam as they read her diary in the Autumn Term.

<https://www.annefrank.org/en/anne-frank/secret-annex/>

Many other museums, art galleries and places of interest also have virtual tours.

- Any of you who like animals might enjoy spying on some of the animals in Houston Zoo.

<https://www.houstonzoo.org/explore/webcams/>

Perhaps you could look up where Houston is. What can you find out about the animals? You could make a poster with some information about the animals that you can see.

- If you have had enough of looking at a computer screen, you may want to make some natural paintbrushes to create your own works of art!

<http://learncreatelove.com/natural-paintbrushes/>

- There is a photography competition based around the subject of trees. Under 16s are welcome to put in an entry and the details can be found by following the link below.

<https://www.blackwatervalleynaturewalks.co.uk/your-favourite-tree-competition>

- Listen to a piece of music that you like. Can you draw a picture of how it makes you feel? Talk to other people in your family about music that they like – perhaps you could listen to some of their music and see how you feel about it.

- Go out for a walk and see if you can create a map of where you went. You might want to collect some fallen leaves, twigs or stones to remind you where you made turns and to decorate your map.

Have fun!



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