

Dear Parents and Carers,

**WE HAVE ASKED PARENTS TO KEEP THEIR CHILDREN AT HOME, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, AND FOR SCHOOLS TO REMAIN OPEN ONLY FOR THOSE CHILDREN WHO ABSOLUTELY NEED TO ATTEND.**

I hope this letter finds you well and you enjoyed the Easter weekend. Thank goodness we were blessed with such marvellous weather so we could make the most of our gardens and daily exercise. Easter Sunday seemed to start very early in the Ford house with a new puppy and an excited Harriet. The egg hunt was done and dusted by 7am so we had to find lots of other things to keep us busy and fill what felt like a long day.

It seemed strange not to have a big family get together over Easter and I am sure, like me, you will be missing loved ones and relatives but it only takes a few seconds of watching what is happening on the news to realise the importance of what we are doing. It is humbling to see the incredible work that so many keyworkers are undertaking to care for the good people of our country and the sacrifices that we must make at this time seem small in comparison. As I write to you we have just heard the news that we are facing another 3 weeks of the current lockdown restrictions and I would like to reassure you that the team here at Warboys are working hard to prepare for the coming weeks so that we can support you and your families to the very best of our ability through these challenging times.

Numbers have been very low in school over the Easter break, but we have had some children in. We have joined forces with Upwood School and Ashbeach School to support our local communities and make the most effective use of our combined resources. This partnership will continue over the next three weeks so there will be a combination of children and staff here from all three schools.

**Keyworkers**

Please note our opening times will remain as **8am-4pm** on weekdays from Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April onwards. If you require childcare because you are a keyworker, please could you kindly complete the childcare request form that Mrs Bradley has sent out to support us with our planning. It is important that we know how many children we are expecting to ensure that staffing levels are adequate. We do recognise that your needs may change at short notice so if this happens please just let us know by calling the School Office. Thank you to everyone who has already completed their request forms for next week.

**Home Learning**

As the summer term kicks off, we will be starting to launch our new home-learning offer. As this is a new venture for the team requiring additional training and support please could I ask you to bear with us whilst we get this up and running? We have identified an online platform called Class Dojo that we will be using for years 1-6 to keep in touch with families and share activities.

We have spent a lot of time researching several different options and settled on Class Dojo as we like the format and the functions within it. It is very child friendly and easy to navigate and we think the children will enjoy using it. We also hope that it's something we will keep and continue to use in the future. Families with children in EYFS will continue to use Tapestry as this is already operating extremely successfully.

There are bound to be a few teething problems with Class Dojo initially, but we hope that by the end of next week these will have been identified and addressed so that from the week commencing 27<sup>th</sup> April we are fully operational. On Monday staff will undergo further training and start to upload some material for children to respond to. As the week progresses, we will gradually increase the work and review how well pupils engage. You will receive a separate communication about Class Dojo and how to access this at home.

It is important to recognise that our current situation is unprecedented, and staff are working tirelessly to respond. There will be limitations to what we can achieve in a 'virtual' rather than a 'real' school experience and we don't expect teachers to try and recreate online what they would do during a 5 ½ hour day in school. We are trying to strike a balance between supporting our children and managing staff workload whilst working remotely and trying to

maintain childcare provision in school. We will do our best with the resources that we have, and our approach will be under constant review as we move forward. Thank you in advance for your patience and understanding.

### **EYFS September 2020**

We are delighted to announce that we have offered places to 41 children to join us in Reception next year. We look forward to meeting our new families soon and giving them a warm welcome.

### **Free School Meals**

During these difficult times there are an increasing number of families experiencing financial hardship as a result of unemployment. If your circumstances have changed, you may be eligible to apply for free school meals and I would urge you to do this. Please see the letter that was sent to all parents last week with further details. Applications are still currently being processed so it is worth your while applying. If you require support or additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### **School Blog**

The staff at school are really missing the children and their regular contact with families. Please keep checking the blog on the school website so that we can keep in touch with you. We are working on something a little special at the moment so watch this space and we will let you know when it is published! You can find the blog by following this link: <https://www.wpa.education/blog/?pid=20&nid=53>

### **Communicating with Staff**

Please could I ask parents and children not to try and contact members of staff using their personal data. This is a direct breach of our communication policy and places staff in a difficult position. Whilst we appreciate that these are unusual circumstances, we must ensure that professional boundaries are maintained, and staff privacy is respected. If you would like to get in touch with a member of the team you can do this by contacting the school office. Emails and telephone messages are checked daily and we will ensure that all communications are passed on. If you would like to speak directly to someone then it is best to telephone between 8am-9.30am on weekdays when Mrs Bradley or Mrs Harding are in the office. You can call between 9.30-4pm but please be patient as there will be a skeleton staff on site answering calls and caring for children.

Class Dojo has a messaging service built into it so from Monday, parents and teachers will be able to communicate directly about home-learning. General enquiries should still be directed to the office.

### **Family Support Worker**

This is just a reminder that our family support worker is available to help you with any difficulties you might be facing at home. Ann James is available Tuesday- Thursday each week and can be contacted as follows: **Tel: 07824 354592 / 01480 376195** or Email: [Ann.james@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Ann.james@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Here is a link to some online advice which you may also find helpful:

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/your-family/family-life/coping-practically-and-emotionally-during-the-covid-19-outbreak/>

### **Safeguarding**

If you have any safeguarding concerns these can be emailed to [safeguarding@wpa.education](mailto:safeguarding@wpa.education).

### **Year 6 Leavers**

The team in Year 6 are conscious that this is a very significant year for the children, and they will be finding this disruption to their schooling very unsettling. We would like to offer reassurance that we are already planning several events and activities to ensure that our children benefit from a well-managed transition and a proper send off when it is safe to do so. Of course, it will not be possible to do everything in the same way that we would normally, but we will find alternative ways to mark this important time. Please let the children know that we are thinking of them and we look forward to seeing them all again as soon as this is possible.

If you have made it to the end of this very long letter, then thank you very much for sticking with it! There is a lot of information to digest this week and there will be additional information to take on board regarding home-learning. I realise that not everyone (myself included) is tech savvy so if you need any help with anything at all please do not hesitate to get in touch. We will all be 'muddling through' next week trying to find a way to manage this new way of working but at least we will be muddling through together.

Thank you as always for your ongoing support.

With very best wishes,

Becky Ford