

Dear Parents / Carers,

This is the hardest letter I have had to write as the headteacher of our wonderful school, The Willows. I will do my best to get the tone right, but forgive me if I fall short of the mark!!

As we said in our post on Wednesday it is with great sadness that we find ourselves in the position of having to close school to the majority of pupils from tomorrow, Friday 20th March 2020. As is always the case, your children are at the forefront of everything we do and we will continue to help and support them in every way that we can.

Before I outline the Willows' learning provision while school is closed in response to Covid –19, I would like to reassure you that I know from personal experience, having been home schooled from the age of 5 – 8 yrs, due to closure of schools when living in war torn Uganda, East Africa in the 1970's, that we will all get through this together and much good can come from these uncertain times.

I appreciate many of you will be concerned about how to juggle all your responsibilities; managing to keep your family safe and healthy, working from home alongside supervising your children's leisure and learning time. Please think about the following:

- look for the positives, use this as an opportunity to spend time together and have fun with the modest things of life and simple activities
- try not to make 'home schooling' a battle ground, children need to feel calm and motivated to learn
- attempt to get a balance between having a routine and going with the flow, children can generally only concentrate for short periods of time before needing a brain break or change of activity
- remember learning is not always about recording on paper, children need to be active, doing tasks with their bodies and voices, as well as minds
- consider your children's global learning; in school we always focus on their personal, social, emotional and health education, along side academic progress and attainment
- don't worry about your children not making progress, all children will be in the same position, we will support them when they come back to school
- talk openly and honestly with your children at an age appropriate level, our school nurse will make herself available by telephone or email for support, especially with children's mental health, she is called Emma Higham and can be contacted through the South team school nurses 0161 912 2340
- don't feel guilty, parenting is the best but hardest job in the world!

Having said all that, please find the Willows provision for home learning as follows:

- All resources, ideas and links will be on the school website, under the children's tab and 'Class Pages' <https://www.willowstimperley.co.uk/class-pages/>
- Mrs Warren will provide a thought for the day for children and parents
- Teachers will set daily learning activities with instructions by 10.00am (term time only -we would like you to enjoy your holidays)
- Year 1 – Year 6 children will be provided with a 'Home Learning Book' for any recording necessary. (PLEASE NOTE TEACHERS WILL **NOT** MARK WORK COMPLETED – although we would be delighted to see what you have done!)
- Children will have a personal bookmark with login details for online resources
- Learning activities will consist of the following:

EYFS – Nursery

Range of activities relating to the Early Years Areas of Learning plus a daily activity:
e.g Letters & Sounds, Numbers,

EYFS – Reception

Daily Phonics and Number activities through tapestry plus daily activities relating to the Early Years Areas of Learning

KS1 & KS2

- Maths activity
- English activity
- An activity from another area of the curriculum
- Daily reading challenge
- Daily physical challenge
- They may also refer to
 - Mathletics, Numbots, TTRS
 - Bug Club, SPAG.com
 - Classroom Secrets
 - Twinkl
- Other ideas can be found on a separate document on the 'Class pages', these consist of useful websites to visit.

I will close now wishing you all the best and trust that you will stay healthy and happy. We look forward to seeing you back at school as soon as possible.

Kind regards, Mrs Warren and the Willows staff team