



Weekly Family Bulletin

Tuesday 14th April 2020

www.halfwaynurseryinfantschool.org

Caring, Sharing, Learning for Life.

Hello 😊

I hope that you are all safe and well, and have been able to enjoy some quality time over the Easter holiday with those in your household. The weather has been very kind to us and it has been nice to spend a little time out in the garden to appreciate the beauty of spring, and really notice things we often take for granted, such as the blossom on the trees and the flowers starting to bloom.

Our staff team hope you liked our video and little song to say a big 'Hello' over Easter. The idea of the rainbow song itself was inspired by our logo and by an email from a parent to say how their child also thought of our school every time they saw a rainbow image. We really wanted to connect with you all in a way we can't do fully in a letter and show that we are all thinking of you all, whether you're in school or at home. Consequently, the rainbow song was born! Our main aim was to make you all smile. We really hope we did! If you haven't seen 'When we see a rainbow' yet, you can find it on our Twitter feed (<https://twitter.com/HalfwayNI>).

Free School Meal (FSM) Voucher Scheme

We have registered for the national Free School Meal 'voucher scheme'. Children who are eligible for free School Meals but who are not attending school to receive their free lunch (i.e. those who are being cared for at home during school closures) will receive a £15 food voucher per week per child eligible for FSMs. The voucher will be emailed to you directly (where you have given us an email address).

Please note - Any FSM children who are also eligible to continue attending school, and are doing so during closure, will continue to receive their free meal in school. They are, therefore, are not eligible for a voucher under the national scheme.

This scheme may take a few more days to set up properly and, until this is done and we know parents/carers are receiving the vouchers, we will continue to offer daily 'grab bags' for FSM children that you can collect from school daily at 11:30 am. If your child is eligible for a free school meal and, therefore, a grab bag, please ring the office on 0114 2482360 each school day before 9:30am to order your child's packed lunch to go.

For those of you who ordered a FSM hamper over the Easter holiday, we hope you enjoyed the contents, and am sure you will join us as we send a massive thank you to the team of Sheffield City Council staff and volunteers that made this possible. 4,000 hampers were made and delivered across the city in only two days last week - brilliant team work that made such a difference to so many families across Sheffield!

Home Learning

Now the new term has started, teachers will regularly update the contents of the home learning pages of our school website. Learning will be updated **today**, and each **subsequent Monday** in term time - although please do look at the suggested timetable we sent out initially and try to balance academic learning each day with fun and practical activities. We know many of you are trying to balance all this with working from home. We really do appreciate that this may be very difficult, and hope that the resources we are making available will help you to keep all the plates spinning! Whilst a routine is really important, please try and keep home learning manageable for both you and your children. The well-being of the whole family is the most important thing to us. Try and incorporate relaxation and calming activities, lots of physical activity, time out in the garden, if possible, and also creative/topic time to help maintain happy children and grown-ups and promote overall health and well-being.

NB - A quick reminder that Purple Mash and TT Rockstars log ins are the same.



Useful information during school closure - a few frequently asked questions

1. Which children can continue to attend education and childcare settings?

The government has made provision for vulnerable children, and children of critical workers, to continue attending education and childcare settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Children of critical workers

Critical workers' children can continue to attend an education or childcare setting unless they are in one of the most vulnerable health groups, as set out in the guidance on shielding. This means children can continue to attend if they have mild underlying health conditions, as specified in this guidance. The education or childcare setting should be informed of any health conditions so that any concerns can be addressed.

The number of social interactions in the education or childcare environment will be reduced as there are fewer children attending, and classroom social distancing is being practised.

Children with a social worker

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will continue to attend an education or childcare setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at severe risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring a child who is considered vulnerable to an education setting, and/or where there are concerns regarding physical health conditions, the social worker and education or childcare setting should explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Children and young people with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home. Some children and young people with an EHC plan have complex needs that are best supported in an education or childcare setting. Education and childcare settings and local authorities will need to consider the needs of all children and young people with an EHC plan, working closely with their parents, and make a risk assessment for each child or young person.

Children and young people with an EHC plan in all health categories, including the most vulnerable, may continue to attend education or a childcare setting as usual if their local authority risk assessment has determined this is appropriate, taking on board the views of their parents.

Individuals in vulnerable health groups

If a child is in a vulnerable health group, or needs to be shielded due to health, or lives with someone in a vulnerable health group, including those who are pregnant, he/she can attend his/her education or childcare setting. The number of social interactions in the education or childcare environment will be reduced, due to there being fewer children attending, and social distancing and good hand hygiene are being practised.

If a child in one of the categories outlined above lives in a household with someone who is in the most vulnerable health groups, as set out in the guidance on shielding, he/she should only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to, and the child is able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young children, and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing.



2. How we are implementing social distancing?

We are taking the following steps to help ensure the risk of virus spread for both staff and children is as low as possible:

- children, parents, carers or other visitors cannot enter school if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). Anyone who is ill needs to stay at home and seek medical advice as appropriate;
- class sizes will be kept as small as possible, within any constraints of numbers of staff members available to work;
- if numbers of children in school require it, we will stagger lunch times, break times, and the movement of pupils around the school to reduce large groups of children gathering;
- parents/carers need to follow the social distancing guidelines, including not gathering at the gates, office area or classroom doors;
- 'social distancing' within education and childcare settings with very young children will be harder to maintain. Staff will implement the above measures as far as they are able, whilst ensuring children are kept safe and well cared for;
- staff and children will wash their hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Children will be encouraged not to touch their face, and will be asked to use a tissue or elbow to cough/sneeze into, and to use bins for tissue waste;
- staff and parents/carers can use education resources such as e-bug and PHE schools resources;
- we have increased the cleaning of surfaces in classrooms, including desks and handles, and within toilet blocks, adhering to guidance on cleaning of non-healthcare settings;
- the local authority will work with parents/carers whose children have an EHCP plan to decide how best to continue supporting these children to stay healthy and well during school closures.

Parents can also help by:

- talking to their children about coronavirus (COVID-19), social distancing and handwashing;
- following guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection;
- not gathering at entrances or in playgrounds, and modelling social distancing so children see and learn about good practice.



Children and online safety away from school

The safety of your child when completing work online is essential. Teaching staff will always consider online safety carefully when planning online lessons/activities. Any use of online learning tools and systems will also be in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

An essential part of online learning is for parents/carers to monitor their child's use of screen time at home, and to talk to their children about how important it is for them to report and raise any concerns whilst online. If you have any worries please inform us. Useful sites with age appropriate practical support for parents/carers related to online safety are -

Childline - for support

UK Safer Internet Centre - to report and remove harmful online content

CEOP - for advice on making a report about online abuse.

It is especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access. **We will NOT be asking children to interact with anyone online.**

Some parents/carers may have seen online companies out there selling additional learning support and educational programmes to supplement the school online offer. The learning at home resources and support provided by school during closure has been set by your own child's teacher and will be comprehensive, providing everything you need to support your child learn at home. If purchasing support from a company is something you are considering, please can we emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual that can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children before sharing any information. Support and guidance for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes -

Internet matters - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

London Grid for Learning - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

Net-aware - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC

Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online

UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers



Free GOV.UK Coronavirus Information Service on WhatsApp

There is a new, free to use service which aims to provide official, trustworthy and timely information and advice about coronavirus (COVID-19), and will further reduce the burden on NHS services. We have been encouraged to use this and share this information with staff and parents/carers.

This service will help combat the spread of coronavirus misinformation in the UK, as well as helping ensure people stay home, protect the NHS and save lives.

The GOV.UK Coronavirus Information Service is an automated 'chatbot' service which will allow the British public to get answers to the most common questions about coronavirus direct from government. The service will provide information on topics such as coronavirus prevention and symptoms, the latest number of cases in the UK, advice on staying at home, travel advice and myth busting. The service will also allow the government to send messages to all opted-in users, if required.

To use the free GOV.UK Coronavirus Information Service on WhatsApp, simply add 07860 064422 in your phone contacts and then message the word 'hi' in a WhatsApp message to get started. A set of menu options is then presented. In response to the option selected, you will be sent relevant guidance from GOV.UK pages, as well as links to GOV.UK for further information.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-coronavirus-information-service-on-whatsapp>

Keep well, and keep safe,

With best wishes

Paula Bestall
Headteacher