



The Winchcombe School

Maple Crescent, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 1LN

Tel: 01635 232780 Fax: 01635 232789

Email: office@winchcombe.w-berks.sch.uk

Website: www.winchcombe.w-berks.sch.uk

Achieve, Believe, Care

17th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I wanted to write to give you the latest update with regards to Winchcombe Primary School's response to the current COVID-19 outbreak.

As previously communicated, we have been following advice from Public Health England (PHE) and paying very close attention to updates – which now come out daily. We ask that all parents adhere to this guidance.

As things stand, the advice is for schools to stay open and carry on as normal. Please assume that the school is OPEN unless informed otherwise. If there were to be any cases or suspected cases of coronavirus connected to the school we would contact Public Health England for further advice. I have discussed with staff the measures we will put in place should the decision be made to close schools. I hope the following answers your questions and concerns:

Communication with the school:

- During a school closure, parents and carers can contact the school by email at office@winchcombe.w-berks.sch.uk. This email will be checked at 9am and 2pm each week day during term time and any important information forwarded to the appropriate teachers and school leaders.
- Parents and carers will be contacted by the Teachers2Parents email and text service whenever we have an important message to share. This may include information about a school closure or the duration of a closure. We aim to let you know by 8am if we need to close the school. Any emergency notices will also be displayed on our website.
- Staff will try to be available during normal school hours. We would ask parents to be sympathetic to the fact that some of our staff are also parents so you may not always get an immediate response, unless the matter is of great urgency.

Continuing learning at home:

We understand that this situation will affect people in different ways. Our intention would be to encourage children to complete the activities set by teachers but we fully understand the various constraints which might be upon families, parents and staff – particularly those with young children and older relatives and of course working parents who may or may not be at home.

There will be three ways children can continue learning during any school closure. We will provide key skills packs and online learning, whilst Twinkl have made their extensive primary resources available for free in the event of a school closure.



1. Key skills packs. Prior to any school closure, children will receive a pack to support development of key skills (reading, writing and maths).
2. Online learning. Teachers will use DB Primary to communicate with their pupils and set learning tasks. This will enable children to progress in their learning, while making sure they continue to feel part of their classroom and school community during potentially challenging times. In addition, children in years 3-6 should continue to log into Times Table Rockstars daily.

During this week, we will remind children how to log on to DB Primary, complete tasks and tell their teacher if they have any worries or concerns. We will also share usernames, passwords and 'how to log on' details with parents and carers. Older children should be able to log on and learn relatively independently, however you will need to 'check in' with them regularly to ensure they are staying safe online. Children in Reception and Year 1 are likely to need support from an adult or older sibling to log on and complete tasks.

Our intention would be to set work across the curriculum (including some physical activity), as we are keen for children not to be in front of devices for too long! Teachers will regularly send emails to their classes. Children can send a message to their teacher by clicking the 'whistle' icon and typing in the box. Please note that this can be used for any message, not just matters of online safety.

We understand that not all families will have access to a computer and the internet, and even if they do, there might be several children all wanting to use a computer at the same time. We have tested DB Primary on a smart phone and tablet and it seems to work well. It would be very helpful if you could make sure that what you do have is working and see if you can share other facilities if access at home is tricky. Please let us know if accessing a device will be difficult for your child. No child will be expected to print anything.

3. Twinkl resources. Twinkl is a website that has a vast collection of quality resources for Primary School age children. They are offering a month's free membership for parents and carers which you can access by going to www.twinkl.co.uk/offer.

In summary, I believe that we are well placed to respond to the next phase of the Government's actions to delay the spread of the coronavirus. If you have any concerns at all then please do not hesitate to contact us. There is also a dedicated helpline for staff, parents and young people should you have COVID-19 questions relating to education and children's social care – see below.

The Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline as follows:

*Phone: 0800 046 8687 Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk
Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)*

In the mean time we would like to thank you for your continued support.
Yours sincerely,

Neil Pilsworth
Headteacher

