



Shepherd Primary School

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Friday 5th February 2021

Dear Parents



It seems right and fitting to start my Friday Letter this week with a quote from Captain Sir Tom Moore:

“We will get through it in the end but it might take time, but at the end of the day we shall all be ok again... the sun will shine on you again and the clouds will go away.” April 2020

I know from speaking to many families recently, that this period of school closure and national restrictions has been so difficult - the longer it goes on, the more challenging it is becoming for so many of you. But we will get through it and we so look forward to our school fully reopening and to welcoming all the children back to school.

In the meantime, if there is anything at all that we can do to help you, please just ask.

I know that many of you will have joined the rest of the nation as I did, in the clap for Captain Sir Tom Moore and the NHS Heroes following his sad passing on Tuesday. Accompanying this Friday letter is something that you may wish to talk through with your child – a fact sheet all about Captain Sir Tom and why he was such a special man and will be remembered so fondly by so many people.

Parent Consultations

Our mid-year parent consultations will take place during the week commencing 22nd February (straight after half term). Early next week you will receive the usual online booking link, to book your appointment via ParentMail. If you have any difficulties, please contact the school office (not your child’s class teacher). This time, we hope to use Google Meet for parents evening, to allow face-to-face meetings between parents and class teachers – further information will follow, as to how to access your appointment.

Safer Internet Day 2021

Tuesday 9th February is Safer Internet Day. So next week we will be incorporating e-safety activities into the timetable for all classes and the first Google Meet for each class next week will be all about e-safety. If as a parent you would like to find out more about how to support your child to keep safe online, please visit:

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2021/safer-internet-day-2021-top-tips/safer-internet-day-2>



Supermarket Vouchers for families in receipt of Free School Meals

Families in receipt of Free School meals can collect their February half term supermarket vouchers from the main school office next week.



Wellbeing Day

On Thursday 4th March we will be holding a World Book Day & Wellbeing Day for staff and children – Mrs Freuchen and I will be setting a range of fun activities for the staff and children to complete, that gives them all time away from the screen and a break from learning online. We will be sending home details of the activities straight after half term, so you can see in advance some of the things your child can do.

On that day our whole team of school staff will also be completing essential First Aid training, Health and Safety training and GDPR training, so school will be closed for all children (as we cannot release staff from their current roles in school when the children are in, without mixing ‘bubbles’).

Mr Vickers Book – The Dragon & The Unicorn

Thank you to all those families who purchased a copy of Mr Vickers’ Book. The book sales raised an incredible £410 for Compassion UK, the charity that Mr Vickers chose to support. Mr Vickers was incredibly grateful for all the support for his first book!



School Supplies

If you are in need of any school supplies to help with remote learning, please visit the school office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays between 10am and 2pm and the office staff will very gladly provide you with the supplies you need (exercise books, pencils, pens).

Wellbeing Survey

Thank you to the 91 parents who completed our Wellbeing Survey, letting us know about your child’s wellbeing during this period of school closure. It was lovely to receive such positive feedback and hear that so many children are doing well. Mrs Freuchen is contacting those parents who asked for additional help or support for their child, as we really do want to help – if there is anyone else who would like any additional support for their child, please do email us anytime at emergency@shepherd.herts.sch.uk

Remote Learning Survey

Thank you to all those families who completed the Remote Learning survey - I was delighted that 112 families gave us feedback on the remote learning that we are providing during school closure! I wanted to share the headline results of the survey with you, along with the action we are taking as a result of your feedback, so please see the survey results below:

Survey Feedback	Action
111 of the 112 families are successfully accessing Google Classroom	I encourage the one family struggling to access Google Classroom to contact the school office so we can help.
78% of families think that the amount of work we are setting is ‘about right’ (7% think we are setting too little work, and 15% think we are setting too much)	Class teachers will be reviewing daily work, ensuring that the amount of work set is online with our policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - E Yrs/KS1: 3 hours per day - KS2: 4 hours per day The most important activities your child completes each day, are English and maths, so as a minimum please try to keep these going each day.
96% of children enjoy Google Meets	We will continue to run Google Meets twice a week, focusing on social activities as well as addressing misconceptions in learning etc.

<p>The elements of remote learning that parents and children value the most are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The weekly timetable outlining planned learning for the week</i> - <i>Learning uploaded each day (rather than weekly)</i> - <i>A video introduction to each day from your child's class teacher</i> - <i>Pre-recorded teaching for English, maths and phonics, recorded by your child's class teacher</i> - <i>Google Meets</i> - <i>Marking and feedback on completed work, from your child's class teacher</i> - <i>The ability for parents to email class teachers directly when needed</i> 	<p>We will continue to include all the things that families value most, in our weekly remote learning.</p> <p>Class teachers are reviewing the less valued things and will ensure these feature less in remote learning, including: the Oak Academy and spag.com</p>
<p>97% of parents are satisfied overall with the remote learning package that we are providing for children</p>	<p>Thank you! Many of you recognised the huge change in our remote learning compared to March 2020 and all the hard work that has gone in to our current plan.</p>
<p>Live Lessons</p> <p>When asked for any other feedback on our remote learning, we have taken on board the comments left - the feedback from a small number of parents was around live teaching. After much research and consideration, we decided alongside governors that we would offer pre-recorded teaching rather than live lessons, as a more effective way for teachers to teach remotely. Class teachers do of course often use live Google Meets to introduce new learning or address misconceptions. You may be interested to read this report, written by Ofsted, titled 'What's working well in remote education' where they bust the myth that live teaching is the best way to deliver remote education:</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whats-working-well-in-remote-education/whats-working-well-in-remote-education</p>	
<p>Finally, I wanted to say thank you for the 108 wonderful comments about our remote learning!</p> <p>I wanted to end the survey feedback by sharing some of the comments with you – please be reassured that these have also been passed on to class teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>Your adaptability to provide home learning during the pandemic has been immeasurable. Thank you Mrs Foad and your amazing staff for being so resilient in these times 😊</i> ❖ <i>We think the school is doing a wonderful job...THANKYOU! Google Classroom works so well and all the extra clips and lessons and links provide a great learning experience. The structure to the day is very much appreciated.</i> ❖ <i>Thank you for all your hard work. The remote learning provision is so much better than the first lockdown and as a result my children are more settled and in a routine at home. Their attitude to learning is much better and I feel that they will adjust well when they return to school.</i> ❖ <i>The structure is perfect and the work set is achievable. Thank you to all the staff at Shepherds - I know a lot of work has gone on behind the scenes to make this happen across the entire school. Thank you.</i> ❖ <i>I think the staff are doing amazing, the work set is easy for us parents to follow.</i> ❖ <i>I think what is being provided is excellent!</i> ❖ <i>You are all doing an amazing job in such difficult times, thank you.</i> ❖ <i>The school is doing all that they can and I cannot fault them.</i> ❖ <i>I think the teachers are doing a brilliant job!</i> ❖ <i>Doing an amazing job! Feel like he is still progressing in his learning while not able to be at school.</i> ❖ <i>Thank you for such a great balance of learning activities. My child is enjoying both the computer and practical tasks, and likes the structure of the weekly plans together with the video introductions each day. They are enabling her to work with a good level of independence.</i> ❖ <i>Thank you for all the hard work that is clearly going into the children's teaching. And thank you for appreciating that many of us are juggling work with school, so we can't necessarily follow the timetable perfectly and sometimes we have to let some things go.</i> ❖ <i>The work set is interesting and varied and the time dedicated to each task is about right. My child appreciates the quick feedback too.</i> 	

- ❖ *I think the provision is excellent! I particularly like the addition of the morning messages, daily reading and pre-recorded lessons. Work is marked quickly with encouraging feedback which really helps to motivate the children. Thank you so much to all of our wonderful staff for working so hard!*
- ❖ *I have been so impressed with the quality and content of the home schooling timetable. I am so pleased it has not been all computer based as my child cannot concentrate for too long online. The lessons have been easy to follow, varied, fun and engaging. I know my child has appreciated having the structure and focused learning in these long lock down days! Thank you very much! You have all done an excellent job under these extremely difficult circumstances!!*
- ❖ *I think the school has worked extremely hard to make sure that the welfare of the children are high priority. Thank you.*
- ❖ *The pre-recorded phonics have been very helpful and engaging. The Google Lives have boosted my children's mood and it's great for them to see their friends and teacher.*
- ❖ *You can see how much goes into home learning and we are incredibly grateful for that. My child struggled at times during the first lockdown but this time he's doing great. I really think the daily videos and meets twice a week has helped to keep him engaged with his learning.*
- ❖ *Very happy with the time and effort that has been put in to help home schooling go as smoothly as possible.*
- ❖ *Many thanks for all your support. The remote provision has been great this term. The Google Meets really help the children to still feel connected to their teacher and schoolmates. The teachers have all been so good in providing encouraging feedback for the work we submit from home.*
- ❖ *I think you are going a brilliant job!!! Thank you all!*
- ❖ *The loan of a laptop from the school is greatly appreciated, and has made home schooling so much more enjoyable, thank you.*
- ❖ *Thank you to all the teachers and staff for their hard work and creativity in ensuring kids' learning is not impacted by the lockdown. Detailed planner of daily work, online submission, swift validation of work by teachers has been extremely helpful. Furthermore my kid looks forward to twice a week Google Meet session.*
- ❖ *I can only imagine how much work goes into making the online learning work. All the staff have been incredible with the amount of effort that has gone in. I can't thank you enough for providing the activities and Google Meets, this was a life saver when my child was missing nursery so much.*
- ❖ *We really appreciate all the hard work that has been put in to providing all the learning material.*
- ❖ *I would like to thank all the teachers, I feel you have all done a fantastic job with the remote learning and how it's passed on to us.*
- ❖ *Great teacher feedback at least once daily which is a great boost.*
- ❖ *This lockdown has been a huge improvement on last lockdown. The timetable is a godsend as it provides structure.*
- ❖ *The remote working content has been brilliant and provides a much needed structure to the day - THANKYOU! I think it is also invaluable for keeping the children engaged with their class teacher and classmates.*

Yours sincerely

Mrs Claire Foad
Headteacher