

Air Balloon Hill Primary School,

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Head Teacher: Mr. T Browse



20th March 2020

Dear parents,

I am writing to explain what is going to happen after today.

From Monday onwards, the school will be closed to all children except those who absolutely need to attend. After today, you should not bring your child to school until further notice. It is very important that we all play our part in reducing the number of children attending school to help stop the spread of coronavirus.

That is a very difficult message for me to deliver to our wonderful school community. The idea that Air Balloon is going to have to close its doors to so many of our children saddens all of us who work here. I can only hope that we will be able to re-open our doors before the end of the academic year. I will, of course, keep updated throughout the closure.

There are some key things that parents should know regarding the closure:

Home Learning

The teachers have been working very hard on preparing home learning activities that they will be sending home next week. The first set of activities will be sent on Monday morning. Following this, we will aim to send some home learning activities every afternoon, by 4pm, ready for the next day.

To begin with, teachers will send work home every day. We will review this later on to see how most families are managing. To begin with, the tasks will focus on consolidation activities and a little bit of inquiry around the wider curriculum. As time passes, teachers may also send home video tutorials to teach new learning and these will be followed up with activities to complete at home.

Home learning – or distance learning – is a new concept for all of us. We may not get it right straight away. I would ask for your patience and understanding as we begin this new process and trial some ideas to see what works. At a later date, we will seek your feedback to see if we need to adapt our initial provision.

Free School Meals

We are working on supporting those children who are entitled to free school meals. (Not including universal free school meals for infants) Our aim is that school lunch food parcels will be made available every week. These can be picked up at school or delivered. We are currently working with our suppliers and our kitchen team to facilitate this and I will write to those families later on next week to confirm our arrangements. The nature of how we deliver this support may change depending on national strategies to help schools deliver free school meals to families whose children are not in school.

Staying in touch

Teachers will be contacting parents and children via phone calls during this period of school closure to check-in with them and make sure everything is OK. Some other members of staff may also check-in with you just to make sure that things are going alright and to see if there's anything we can do for you during this challenging time.

Staying safe

We are living through very strange times! The changes that we are all going to have to make will challenge all of us. That's why it's more important than ever to look out for each other. If you are finding these changes difficult, please do get in touch.

Everyone can achieve.

Everyone can learn.

Everyone belongs.

There are a number of ways you can contact us:

- School email: school@abhps.com
- School phone: 0117 903007 (8:30am-10:00am)
- Louise Hennys - Family Support Worker: 07469029470

If you have concerns about a child's safety and wish to report this, please contact First Response on 0117 903 6444

If your children are feeling anxious, worried or unsafe at home they can connect with Childline by phoning 0800 1111, or visiting their website www.childline.org.uk. We will also be looking at ways in which children can contact the school directly so they can communicate with us or ask us questions. I will update you on this when we've worked it out.

School community

Even though we may not be together, I don't want us to feel apart! I will be looking at a variety of ways where the children at home can join in with whole school events. This may be through a school YouTube channel where we can post important messages, story readings, exercise classes, singing sessions and even whole school assemblies. This could be a really fun way of keeping the Air Balloon spirit alive until we are safe to come back together.

Au revoir

I know that this enforced goodbye will be making many of us feel a range of emotions but I have to focus on the positive thought that we are only saying 'until we meet again'. I hope that this school closure passes swiftly and that we will soon be a thriving school community once again.

Air Balloon is a very special place and during times like this I am reminded of how much we value and care for each other. Thank you all so much for your kindness and understanding during this time. We have all been very touched by those of you who have taken the time to message us with your thoughts and thanks. We will miss you all and we will continue to work hard to support you and your children during this time.

Take care, and I will write to you all soon.



Tim Browse