

28.04.2020

It has now been over a month since we have sent most children home under government instruction in response to the Coronavirus outbreak. What a whirlwind it has been! We have all now probably started to fall into a new rhythm of life and the sound of school, full of the everyday chatter, is but a sweet memory- for the moment. Sadly now over 20,000 people in the UK have lost their lives due to this indiscriminate virus. Words like "lockdown", "social distancing" and "quarantine" have now entered our children's every day vocabulary. I know parents are doing their very best to encourage their children to complete home learning whilst trying to juggle their own working from home scenarios as well as keeping everyone's spirits up. Maybe hoping for bread flour to make an appearance in the weekly shop and trimming overgrown hair with a dullish pair of kitchen scissors and hoping for the best (I'm certainly kicking myself for cancelling my overdue hair appointment last February half term because I had cancelled the previous one in December!) and maybe...just maybe reconnecting as a family, spending some sunny days in the garden, playing board games together and hopefully through the frustrating and sad bits there might be some happy memories being made that will never be forgotten. Whatever you are getting up to and however you are coping with the lockdown I know you are doing your best. Please don't worry about your child making academic progress-it is about being safe and healthy. I have consulted with numerous other schools and all are taking very much the same approach and doing what is best for their children and families and keeping the options wide so that parents can chose the approach that is best for them. Believe me no one is expecting your child to come out of lockdown with a PHD! If you can just keep them interested in their learning and not losing ground by practicing some writing (daily journal) and reading daily that is fine- on top of that there are options to follow more formal lessons such as the Oak Academy lessons online and to use the BBC Bitesize website. Both of these are back by the DFE. Now is the time to be creative and enjoy learning- learning is in every art and craft, every cake being baked, song being sung but as well there is the life lessons and learning that comes with being resourceful, resilient and patient in the face of a crisis. When we come back to school our focus will be on making sure children can re-adjust to school life and support their wellbeing and once again baseline where everyone is with their learning and go from there. Please don't worry if you feel you aren't doing enough or too much or the right thing- Your main task is to just love your children right now and keep your family safe. As always please feel free to email myself or your child's teacher if you have any concerns. I am hoping to know more about when schools will be back after 7th of May as that is when the government will be reviewing the current lockdown measures and I will be sure to be in contact

if we have any official advice. In the meantime please stay safe and well and I look forward to seeing you soon.

9.03.2020 10.45am

As most of you are aware, we have been instructed to shut our doors after our last session on Friday. At the moment, from Monday, we will be accommodating only children of key workers and vulnerable pupils should parents have no other alternative for care. We are waiting for confirmation of who is deemed a key worker and will be in contact shortly - if you have any questions please email the office. As I have a duty of care to my own staff and their families, should any of them need to self-isolate there may be the need to fully close the school if we cannot have enough staff on site. We hope this will not be the case but we encourage only those who need the provision to use it. Many of our staff have their own families, elderly relatives and we even have some staff in the high risk category who are putting themselves at risk to support the community in this unprecedented time.

Meanwhile, we are trying to have a really lovely two days for the children who are in school currently as we realise this could be the last time we are in session until further notice. Learning packs will be coming home with children either today or Friday.

17.03.2020

No doubt about it this is an anxious time for many children, parents and families. We have never experienced disruption to lives and routines on this scale in our lifetimes. We must adhere to the guidance we are given by the DFE but feel there is a very good possibility we may have to close the school either due to staffing issues or DFE closure due to the Covid19 virus.

Anstey First School Staff are currently compiling and organising a learning bank of resources, articles, activities and tasks for our pupils. We will also be sending home books for daily journaling and books to record learning in the instance that we need to officially close. At the moment we are trialling an online learning platform called Seesaw but will send you further information in the near future. We recognise that you may have multiple children in the house and may even be working from home yourself which will no doubt put a strain on computer devices as well as internet service so we are hoping to have a range of paper based, practical, physical and online learning that can be utilised to give children a range of opportunities to continue their learning.

Should school closures take place myself and staff will be available during school hours through email but should you have any questions please feel free to email myself at Head@anstey.herts.sch.uk

In the meantime please find the information below that you may find of support during this time.