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Stephanie Severn (Mrs.) – Head Teacher

29 January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

We have survived another week of Remote Learning. Thank you for all the feedback. We are getting used to the resources that work best for you and are adapting the work we provide all the time. Some parents have commented about the amount of work that needs to be printed off. This is a challenge – as we realise that some children find it easier to work on the printed sheets, particularly in KS1 (Y1 and Y2). We have reflected on this and are trying to use strategies that reduce the need to print off materials. We will keep working on this. We are also trying to respond to requests that we provide activities that do not require the use of a screen. We share your concerns about this.

We know many of you are juggling a multitude of tasks at home – work commitments, childcare and Remote Learning. We are working in challenging times. Thank you for all your hard work in helping your children to keep up with their learning. Your efforts will make such a difference to your children.

Government Announcements

We are getting used to regular Government announcements. This week we received an important announcement about Half Term. The DfE have confirmed that schools will close to all children at half term – Monday 15th February to Friday 19th February 2021. This means that the Key Worker setting will not be open during this week.

We also received the announcement that schools will not re-open to all children until at least Monday 8th March. I'm sure all of you were relieved that a possible date has been declared. Let's hope everyone continues to follow the lockdown rules and the rate of vaccination continues so we can all feel safe returning to school.

Key Worker Setting

We have tried to accommodate as many critical workers needs as possible in the setting and have no more spaces available. Could I take this opportunity to remind parents using the setting, that the setting is only available to critical key workers for the days that they are at work. In line with Government guidance, all parents are asked to keep children at home wherever possible.

Snow

We have heard that there may be some snow this weekend. For children attending the Key Worker setting, the easiest place to find out whether school has had to be closed is the school website – on the Home page. A message will be placed in the yellow box from about 7.00am if the school cannot open. The same message will be posted on the Gloucestershire school closures page - <https://closures.gloucestershire.gov.uk/>

Lateral Flow Testing for Staff in Primary Schools

This week, Lateral Flow Tests have been made available for staff in Primary Schools. This is intended to identify positive cases of coronavirus in staff who are asymptomatic as the data tells us that 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 don't have any symptoms. At Hope Brook, we welcome the introduction of rapid testing for our staff.

At this point in time, the testing system is in place for staff only. The DfE does not have plans for the regular testing of primary school children.

Children's Mental Health Week

Finally, I should mention that next week is 'Children's Mental Health Week' – organised by the Place2be charity. (You may be aware that Billy Ocean and the Young Voices Choir have released a single in support of this charity.) The theme this year is 'Express Yourself'. The Place2be charity are hoping to use this week to shine a light on children finding ways to express how they feel or what they are thinking about their world. Their aim is to use creative strategies such as art, poetry, music, drama or photography – so children feel good about expressing themselves. If you are interested in finding out more about this, ideas about how to encourage your children to express themselves can be found at the following link.

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/>

Enjoy the weekend.

Stay safe,

Stephanie Severn