



# Shortlanesend School

## Newsletter



29th January 2021

### Spring Term

Dear Parent/Carer

### School Update

We are two weeks away from half-term. The DFE informed schools this week that they are to close for the entire week. Staff will remain alert to any virus issues which may arise, however, it will be a much needed time to relax for children, parents and the school community. We will reopen to critical worker/vulnerable pupils on Monday 22nd February. Eligible Free School Meals families will receive a Wonde voucher to cover the half term period.

Please note also that **all Aspire academies will be closed to ALL pupils**, including critical workers/vulnerable pupils, **on Friday 12th February** for a planned Trust INSET staff training day. INSET days are established diary dates in any given academic year and the Trust has retained this date to ensure professional development and teaching & learning best practice continues across all our academies.

We continue to thank you for all your efforts in providing support of your child's learning. We are fully aware of the pressures which families are currently experiencing, the vast majority of our staff are parents and grandparents and are undergoing similar anxieties and demands.

This lockdown is very different. Last year, during the first lockdown the weather was better, lockdowns were new to everyone, more parents were furloughed and/or unable to go to work, so were home more. Also, employers were probably more accepting of the situation. Against this background the message from the government was very much – Do what you can. Teachers running Key Worker provision last year were initially guided to set activities for children, not to formally teach.

This time schools are now required to set an amount of remote learning roughly equivalent to a full day in school. Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond to the Aspire Remote Learning questionnaire this week. The feedback reflected extremely high levels of understanding of the situation, with many very positive comments made and well wishes sent to our staff. From our survey 70% of you responded by saying that we had the amount set just right.

The survey was fully scrutinized by all teachers during our weekly staff meeting, with any common threads and points noted. We wish to assure you that we remain committed to helping and guiding you through these times. Staff continue to be available through the day for phone conversations and online support should you require it. Please note, there may be some delays in response as staff are often providing this remote support, whilst planning and teaching vulnerable and key worker children in school.

Below is the link to our home learning page which contains links to videos which aim to troubleshoot logging on and accessing the online learning platforms. There are also recorded stories from staff and other usual links.

[Welcome to Shortlanesend School \(eschools.co.uk\)](https://eschools.co.uk)

### **Lateral Flow Testing**

This week the staff who are supporting the in-school provision tested themselves on Thursday for the first time. The results were all thankfully negative.

We wish to make it very clear to, If staff report a positive result on any following test, **Bubbles may have to close with very little notice.**

### **In-school provision**

Like everyone, we were pleased to see the government discuss plans for a return of more children to schools, with the date given of **8<sup>th</sup> March**. Whilst we remain positive that we will be able to welcome more (hopefully all) our children back into the classroom in the near future, we have to await further clarification from our government concerning this date. This is another reminder that as a school, we are at the mercy of certain factors which remain out of our control.

For now, the school remains open to key workers and vulnerable children. We remain at full capacity for this provision, and continue to echo the strong government and local authority message **that this service is only to be used by parents when there is no other alternative for your child to be home.**

**If you are working from home, the safest place for your child is there, with you.**

Thank you to those parents who continue to negotiate changes to their work pattern with their employer and promptly inform the school they no longer needed a booked place. This is greatly appreciated.

### **MyOn**

Mrs Ashley was pleased to note that since the launch of MyOn 477 books were read up to Thursday across the school. Well done readers!

### **Children's Mental Health**

Next week is Children's mental health week. We will be highlighting mental wellbeing with all our children remotely and in school during the week. For parents and carers there is a link below to follow for support and advice.

[Parents and Carers - Children's Mental Health Week 2021](#)

### **New Development**

The parental consultation regarding our exciting proposed new development for our school remains live. Below is a link to the area on our school website. Please take the time to have a look at the information and plans. The consultation will last for another 4 weeks.

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Please, have a restful weekend and stay safe and well.