



## HT Update (COVID19) for Parents 02.04.20

I would like to update you regarding the plans for the school in the coming weeks. Staff have been working hard to support pupils as you take on the task of helping your child to continue learning from home. I would encourage you to keep close communication with your teacher via whatever means. Telephone, text, email and increasingly TEAMS are being used for video calls with you all. I will say more about this later, but firstly, our plans for school!

**The school remains open to the parents of key workers, who can make no alternative arrangements, and those who have a social worker.** This is being staffed by a skeleton staff each day. There is a paediatric first aider and DSL on site at all times.

Many parents have chosen to follow government advice and remain at home, but the school remains open for identified pupils with specific needs.

**For more vulnerable pupils,** parents and their social workers have been liaising closely with the school and have taken individual decisions, which are in the best interests of the child. The headteacher and DSL will remain in close contact with these families for the duration of this pandemic and the school has adopted clear contact schedule for all pupils who are vulnerable and have social workers. They will offer support and guidance to these families and will continue to work closely with social workers and any other the safeguarding advice from the LA Safeguarding Team. The HT and DSL have established a agency which is involved with the family or child.

**The school continues to run 'virtually'**. Class teachers are in contact with parents at least once a week (but in reality contact is even more frequent). Teachers provided all pupils with a home learning pack, which included paper copies of work and book. Additionally, teachers are offering all pupils a wealth of learning activities online, which are personalised to the needs of the child. These is being closely monitored by teachers and senior staff.

Additionally, **the school website** provides further guidance and material. There are several online platforms for pupils to access, where tasks, activities and reading materials are set by class teachers. Also, there are several school challenges (e.g. BSL Challenge and Challenge of the Week), which are frequently updated. There is a growing online library of signed stories. Pupils are signposted to various web links, which are ideally suited for deaf sign bilingual pupils.

Furthermore, there is a **Parents Section** on the front page of the website, which offers parents information about their child's well-being, BSL resources and Headteacher's Newsletters (which is updated every few days).

**Communication with parents** provides families with information, direction and support relating to home learning. As ever, the school has personalised the contact to meet the individual needs of the family. The school has contacted every family (via text, email, telephone) and is beginning to develop video conferencing facilities so that face to face virtual contact can take place. This is especially important for our deaf sign bilingual pupils. Currently, we are trialling the use of TEAMS and Facebook (school account) as well as developing a Teams page for each class. No doubt, this will develop further in the coming weeks.

For the purposes of this document, information about school opening has been divided into three phases:

### 23.03.20 – 03.04.20

- The school is running a 'school club' for identified pupils (who have social workers) and key workers. This is run by a skeleton staff and the headteacher.
- There is a paediatric first aider onsite as well as a DSL.
- A risk assessment has been put in place to ensure that where pupils are attending school, it is deemed to be the safest place for them.
- All other pupils are able to access school 'virtually'.
- Staff are communicating closely with families and signposting them to online learning platforms as well as providing learning activities which are personalised to the needs and abilities of the children.
- Safeguarding remains at the forefront of our plans and practice and our safeguarding policy underpins all that we are doing. The HT and DSL continue to be guided by the very latest advice from the DFE and the local safeguarding teams.

**06.04.20 – 20.04.20**

- During this time the school will remain open 'virtually'. Teachers will continue to provide home learning opportunities to families and parents will be signposted to other relevant resources online. Teachers will be available for weekly contact with the families of pupils in their classes.
- The HT and DSL will remain in close contact with families who have social workers very regularly. A schedule of contact has been put in place and parents are aware of this.
- The HT and DSL will remain in close contact with social work teams and all other agencies who are already working with these families.
- If parents need to contact school in an emergency, please text school on the parent text line. This will be checked on a daily basis.

**20.04.20 -**

- The school will offer a 'school club' for identified pupils (who have social workers) and key workers. This is run by a skeleton staff and the headteachers.
- There will be a paediatric first aider onsite as well as a DSL.
- A risk assessment is in place to ensure that where pupils are attending school, it is deemed to be the safest place for them.
- All other pupils are able to access school 'virtually'.
- Staff are communicating closely with families and signposting them to online learning platforms as well as providing learning activities, which are personalised to the needs and abilities of the children.
- Safeguarding remains at the forefront of our plans and practice and our safeguarding policy underpins all that we are doing. The HT and DSL continue to be guided by the very latest advice from the DFE and the local safeguarding teams.

**As you know, the situation is changing by the day and so I cannot plan any further ahead than at this stage, but as soon as I know more, I will share it with you.**

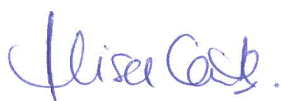
**Free School Meal Vouchers:** Thanks you for your patience! Finally, the DFE have sent us through the e-vouchers and you should receive something from us tomorrow. If you have any problems, then please do contact school and we will try to help.

**Our plan for 'virtual contact':** Whilst communication via more traditional means is absolutely brilliant, they do not offer us the ability to communicate with your child in sign language. This is our aim and we are working hard to achieve this in a safe and easy way! We are trialling the use of Microsoft Teams to provide us with a solution. Our plan is that each teacher will have her own 'virtual' classes. She will be able to set up scheduled meetings with one or even several member of the class. Each person will be able to see each other and sign to each other. There will also be the facility to the spoken word translated into subtitles instantly. In this way, we will be able to remotely deliver some online teaching and have even better communication with you and your child. This relies on you all having email and (ideally) having downloaded the TEAMS app to your laptop or home computer (it runs just as well on mobiles and iPads... I have tried it!).

If you have not yet come across Microsoft Teams, it is really an excellent tool to allow members of your friends, family and colleagues to see and talk to each other to ease the sense of isolation. You download it through Office 365. Please will you 'have a go' with your friends and family – and soon we will be trying out with you!

**During the holidays,** If you want to get in contact with me to alert me to your needs, then please email: [a.carter@longwill.bham.sch.uk](mailto:a.carter@longwill.bham.sch.uk). Alternatively, please use parent text. I will check the parent text line every morning for messages throughout the Easter holidays.

I have loved seeing all your photos of the children working and we have uploaded them to our school website. Please keep the photos coming! It is so lovely for us to see your children enjoying the home activities! It gives us all a 'real boost' too! It only leaves me to wish you a safe and happy weekend and holiday.



Alison Carter  
Headteacher