



HT Update (COVID19) for Parents 30.04.20

Dear Parents and Carers,

I do hope that you are all managing to keep safe, well and happy during this difficult time. We would all like to send you our thoughts and best wishes during this period of lockdown because of COVID19. Staff continue to do our very best to support you and your children 'from afar'.

By now you will know that teachers are able to make **video contact with you and your children** using TEAMS. I would encourage you to use this 'virtual classroom' means of communication. The children might be a bit shy at first (it is not everyday they see their teacher onscreen and in their homes!), but we are finding that that quickly evaporates and that they are then really enjoying the contact.

If you, however, are finding online internet contact tricky, then let us know and we can support you via telephone and text. Each week, week we can send out **home learning packs** via the post as well. So please do ask either your teacher or our **home link assistant** (Mona Manku) if you would like this. Many parents are appreciating this additional support already – please just ask us if you would like one.

Also, I would ask you all to send us **photos or video of your child's learning**. We love to see their craft creations and other fabulous outcomes from our weekly online 'Challenges of the Week', BSL Challenges etc. We post them on the blog for pupils, parents and the wider community to see. Seeing the children and their lovely work is a real tonic for us all!

Whilst at home, the children can enjoy **BSL stories**, which are being signed by our Deaf Team. Please do help your child find these on our website! Just go to this link:

<https://www.longwill.bham.sch.uk/pupil-info>

Many of us are feeling in need of support (financial, emotional, medical, communication etc) and so I would like to signpost you all to a wealth of people and places who want to help:

- **Early Help Support** within the city: Information is on our website. Look in the PARENTS section and then click on EARLY HELP https://24a52a69-65d0-4db3-910c-42272f1e5a19.filesusr.com/ugd/290d99_a6b7a664867f4f0a81b0bed97982e1ee.pdf Alternatively, please read the information there and contact myself or Mrs Jackson if you think you are in need of help.
- Our **Educational Psychology Service** can support parents on a 1:1 basis if you feel you or your child needs emotional support. They can offer a telephone helpline service. Again, I have put the link on the website (Parents/Wellbeing Top Tips/Educational Psychology), but you can also access information by using this link: https://24a52a69-65d0-4db3-910c-42272f1e5a19.filesusr.com/ugd/290d99_4191cf08c9cc4e29a4f929e9a83d7867.pdf If you feel you might like to talk to someone, please email: Stephanie.Bowen@birmingham.gov.uk
- The **School Nursing Service** is keen to support pupils with medical needs. If you are in need of support (struggling with medication etc...), then please contact: 0121 466 4270 or 0121 465 2622. Alternatively, you can email BCHNT.holidaycoverssnteam@nhs.net Staff are available Monday – Friday between 8:30am and 4pm.

The **Nursing Service** has asked me to encourage parents to contact their GP, 111 or emergency services if they have any concerns about their children. Whilst hospitals are busy with the current

crisis, they are *never* too busy to help those in medical need for non-COVID related illness. **Please do contact them for help if you need it.**

The school remains open to the parents of key workers, who can make no alternative arrangements, and those who have a social worker. The school continues to run a creche-type facility for a handful of pupils who fall into this category. The government message remains the same however, – that the safest place for your child is at home. This is where the vast majority of Longwill pupils are. Thank you for your support.

The school continues to run ‘virtually’. Class teachers remain in contact with parents at least once a week (but in reality contact is even more frequent). You will have received pupils **home learning packs** earlier. If you would like anymore, please either text school or ask your class teachers. There is a huge amount of material now on **our website** for the children – lots of fun activities and challenges! Please do help your child to take part!

And do not forget that there are several online platforms for pupils to access – **Mathletics** is a firm favourite of many children. They also love their weekly achievement certificates, which we have been emailing out to pupils who have participated. If you need help accessing Mathletics or any of our online platforms, please let your teacher know or text school.

The **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 is updated every few days, so please keep looking there for new information.

Free School Meal Vouchers: Thanks you for your patience! The DFE system has been really difficult for many of you (and us!), but I hope you have all now managed to activate the vouchers. If not, please text school to tell us and we will try to help.

‘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. We now have started using Microsoft Teams to communicate with children. Each teacher now has her own ‘virtual’ classroom. Scheduled meetings with one or even several members of the class are taking places throughout the week now. I hope your child is enjoying the contact! If you are still having problem getting in touch in this way, then please let us know. We have a super IT Team who can solve many of our technical problems!

If you want to get in contact with me to alert me to your needs, then please email: a.carter@longwill.bham.sch.uk. Alternatively, please use parent text. The parent text line is checked every morning for messages and the school telephone is ‘manned’ between 9:30 and 2:30pm every weekday.

There are some wonderful pictures of children working and we have uploaded them to our school website. Please keep the photos coming! We really enjoy seeing them as I am sure you do!

Also, do not forget it is **National Deaf Awareness Week** next week! Please watch out for activities relating to this on our website – I think our Deaf Team have something planned!
Stay safe!



Alison Carter
Headteacher