Monday 6th April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we enter the third week of closure it is now time to provide you with another update. We hope that all of our families are safe and well and observing the lockdown rules and social distancing measures currently in place. We all know the importance of following this advice and the impact that ALL our actions can have on the spread of COVID-19.

This is a very unusual and difficult time for all of us and we do hope that those of you who are taking on the role of at home teacher are managing well. We are pleased that everyone is pulling together and doing their bit to protect the NHS by STAYING AT HOME!

At this unprecedented time we believe that first and foremost children should feel safe and loved and the focus should be upon the child’s happiness and wellbeing, however you achieve this. Every household will be dealing with the current situation differently, but we would advise you to try to put in place some sort of routine and structure during these unknown times. This should help to prevent children from becoming bored which can in turn cause other issues.

We would encourage you to read, practice tables and use the many online activities that are available - but most importantly, have fun with your children! Playing, baking, making, building, spending some time exercising and getting fresh air in your gardens and spending time together as a family are all very valuable experiences.

It may be that you are feeling a bit bombarded with all the different things available. Maybe a good idea would be to pick one site (e.g. Whit Rose Maths) and stick with it daily for a few weeks.

Try to ensure that weekends are approached differently from the week days and that contact is maintained with friends and other family members through alternative means such as Face Time or Instant Messaging at set times of the day.

Some examples of a daily structure are attached – please feel free to use, adapt or ignore.

Please remember that this is just advice and how home learning is carried out in your home will depend on your individual circumstances.

**UPDATES**

1. **EMERGENCY PROVISION FOR CHILDREN OF KEYWORKERS**
   Although school is currently closed we are providing emergency child care for some families where parents are key workers - but we are pleased to say that most children are safe at home. This is by far the best way to ensure everyone’s safety and reduce the spread of the Coronavirus. We thank those parents who have put arrangements in place in order for their child/ren to remain at home. In true Gunter style our dedicated team have pulled together and are ensuring that the children that are in school are being kept safe, busy and happy. Please follow us on twitter to see all the latest marvellous creations and experiences.

2. **EASTER HOLIDAYS**
   School will remain open for the children of Keyworkers during the Easter holidays (with the exception of Fri 10th and Monday 13th April) Once again we thank the amazing efforts and collaboration of all of our staff that has enabled this to happen.

3. **STATUTORY ASSESSMENTS**
   As you may have heard in the press, Year 1 phonics screening test, Year Two and Year six SATs have all been cancelled. Our children and staff have worked hard in the lead up to
these assessments and as such we will still celebrate their achievements by providing accurate teacher assessments at the end of the academic year.

4. SCHOOL CONTACTING PARENTS

We still want to make sure that all our children and families are safe and well. In the coming weeks we will make contact by telephone to ensure that home learning is going well (hopefully!) and that you are accessing all the resources provided on the school website and of course to say hello to the children! If you receive a call from a withheld number it may well be us…

5. UPDATING THE WEBSITE

We shall be updating the website this week to include links to home learning resources. This will include suggested activities for maths, reading, writing and foundation subjects/topic with useful website lists - many of whom are currently offering free membership. Please visit the ‘Home Learning’ page on the Children’s menu later this week at www.gunterprimary.org...

6. WHOLE SCHOOL PROJECT

We would like the whole school to engage in a local studies project that can involve all family members. This can be based on any aspect that your child/ren and you as a family are interested in. It could include famous landmarks, historical events, transport networks, famous people from the area, the history of the school or any other ideas that you have.

Children could carry out research, interview (not face to face of course) family members and friends, build models of buildings, create PowerPoints, newspaper reports, record audio reports, do a blog, draw, paint, make collages, make maps, produce collections of items that represent the local area, use lego or construction equipment etc.

We are always delighted with the creativity and enthusiasm of home projects and can’t wait to see what wonderful ideas you have. All work will eventually be displayed in school and shared with our whole community.

Please do keep an eye on the school website but also follow the school Twitter account for further information.

7. VOUCHERS FOR FSM CHILDREN

A national scheme has been launched to provide supermarket vouchers. If you are eligible you will now have received an email with a voucher code which can be redeemed at participating supermarkets (Morrisons, Tesco, Sainsbury’s, Asda, Waitrose, M&S). The next vouchers are due this week and will be distributed in the same way.

8. REOPENING

Looking ahead, it seems quite uncertain as to when schools will open for “business as usual”. We are sure, like us, you hope that this comes sooner rather than later; however we will be following the latest Government advice, then basing decisions in school on the well-being and safety of all our families and the community.

We will continue to provide you with updates as the need arises. In the meantime, please keep safe, and treasure this quality time with your families. Use this opportunity to make new memories, work on tasks together, help them with their learning and listen to how they think. You already know that
your little people are amazing and they will grow up so quickly, so try to enjoy this time even in these difficult circumstances.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support and to wish you and your families a safe and happy Easter.

Stay safe everyone. Stay indoors, protect the NHS, and save lives.