



**Fairstead Community Primary
and Nursery School**
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Primary and Nursery School

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope everyone is safe and well and managing as best they can under the current circumstances. There are a number of important items below that I am writing to you about today.

School places

We have had a number of parents getting in touch to say they are finding home learning difficult and would like their child to return to school. Unfortunately, we must operate a careful (and difficult) balance. Offering support to those critical workers who really need it and keeping the numbers of people (children and adults) in school as low as possible. If there are more children in school there will need to be more staff which leads to greater numbers in an enclosed space which in turn increases the risk of transmission.

We have strict guidelines to only have children who have parents who are critical workers and not working from home or who are vulnerable. We also have limits, as per our risk assessment, on how many pupils we can have in school to ensure safe social distancing.

If you are a parent or a carer that is finding remote learning difficult know that you are not alone. However, we have to remind ourselves about why we are doing this, especially as this week saw the death rate hit 100,000 and the infection rates continue to rise in the Fairstead and Springwood area. Our aim is to stop the spread of transmission and allowing more children to come to school will not help.

How can we help you?

- If you are struggling with your child's behaviour and attitude towards home learning, we can make call, talk to your child, support you with behaviour management techniques
- If our child has SEND our inclusion team are happy to call and support you with different strategies.
- If you are having difficulties with technical issues, we can talk to you and help solve the problem or provide a device.
- If you are having difficulties with the content of the work, you can message the class teacher and they will be able to clarify and explain the work for you.
- If you are struggling to teach your child new concepts, make sure they log in to Teams or J2E to access the help and support that is available
- If you are struggling to juggle working from home and home learning, let the teacher know that your child's work may not be done during the day or think about catching up at weekends.
- If your child is finding difficulty with the work set, let the teacher know, we can offer some 1:1 Teams sessions to help your child get back on track.

We understand the pressures on parents at the moment, many of us are parents too and are experiencing the same anxieties as you. We are experiencing very difficult times, but I ask that you are patient and kind with our staff who are doing all that they can to give your children the best possible education under the circumstances.

If you have any feedback on how we can support you more, please let us know.



Houses Mixing

I have received reports of a number of households mixing with each other. Please remember that there are rules in place during this pandemic that are there to support us all.



Stay home - only leave for work, essential shopping, exercise or medical appointments



No household mixing indoors or outdoors unless in your support or childcare bubble



Exercise allowed outdoors once a day, in your local area. You can exercise with your household, support bubble, or one other person



Non-essential shops, leisure and entertainment venues closed



Schools closed except for vulnerable pupils and children of critical workers. Universities teaching online, with some course exceptions



Pubs and restaurants closed, but takeaway food permitted

If we are aware of children and households that are not following the government guidance, you may risk losing your place at school.

Lateral Flow Devices

You may be aware that, from this week, 25th January, all school staff have been asked by the Department for Education (DfE), to take a lateral flow test (LFT) twice weekly, in order to monitor cases of Covid 19 in schools, and to support us to stay open and our communities to stay safe.

Up to one in three people who have the virus have it without symptoms (they are asymptomatic) so could be transmitting the virus unknowingly. We began using the tests this week and they will continue to be used twice weekly so that any member of staff who may be carrying the virus can be identified and asked to isolate in order to control the spread.

This could have implications for all of our families. If your child has a place in school, we may need to ask you to keep your child at home at short notice. We will endeavour to get a message of closure to you by 8.00am on a Monday or Thursday should we need to notify you about a bubble closure.

I do understand that this may well be disruptive for you and may be difficult to manage, but I sincerely hope that this development will help us to identify positive cases more quickly and break the chains of transmission.

We are all very much looking forward to the day when we can welcome all our pupils back in school and we can enjoy being together again. Let us hope that this testing regime makes this happen a little sooner.

As always if you have any questions please don't hesitate to get in contact with us.

Paper Based Learning

Many of you are requesting hard copies of work to be printed which we are happy to do if it supports your child's learning at home. To ensure your child gets the feedback they need we will now be asking for the work to be sent back before the next set of learning tasks are given out. We will then be able to track progress and give your child feedback on the work they have completed. It will also give you and your child the opportunity to feed back to us about any additional support we can offer.

All staff at school have gone to a lot of effort in researching remote learning and effective ways of delivering this. As a school we are able to provide devices for you to use at home so that you can access this. Those children that are accessing our remote learning offer regularly are really seeing the benefits of interacting with their teachers, TA's and their classmates so I would urge you to log on if you have not done so already:

Benefits of accessing our remote learning include:

- Interaction with teachers and TA's
- Interaction with friends – opportunities to smile with each other!
- Supports routines and behaviour
- Provides essential feedback for your child's work

- Achievement assemblies on Friday where peoples efforts are celebrated
- Prizes for engagement during the week

Please contact Mrs Collins if you are having technical difficulties or require devices at home.

More support can be found on our website:

<http://www.fairsteadprimaryschool.co.uk/home-learning/>

Thank you for your continued support – I hope you all have a good weekend

Yours sincerely

Daniel Farthing
Headteacher

