

Harleston C.E. Primary Academy

School Lane, Harleston, Norfolk. IP20 9HG

Tel: (01379) 852302 / 853211

E-mail: office@harleston.stbenets.org

Website: www.harleston.stbenets.org



Interim Headteacher: Mrs M Foreman

18th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Once again we have managed to get through a school day and we are able to open with confidence tomorrow, knowing that all our children will be able to access a loving, caring environment where they will be taught very well by our teachers and teaching assistants. A huge thank you to our parents and staff for their support and commitment to everyone's safety and well-being at such a difficult time. We have not had an increase in staff absence and are therefore able to stay open. However, the situation could change rapidly and I wait for the next announcements from the Prime Minister.

We are now well underway with training the children how to use Google for Education and all school based children have accessed their accounts and changed their passwords. For children absent from school in years 2 to 6, login information has been sent home. In answer to parents who are self-isolating themselves and their children and have asked for us to send work home, please get your child logged on to Google through the information sent out to you and wait for work to be put on line which will happen by the end of this week/beginning of next week. There are many websites that children can access to support home learning and these can be found on our school website.

Also, behind the scenes, I have carried out a full risk assessment which includes taking the following precautions:

- Heightened attention to effective hygiene practice by staff, children and visitors including increased attention to cleaning procedures
- Allowing additional time for handwashing every day
- Emotional support for children to help allay fears when they are presented to us, and generally making sure there is an atmosphere of calm across the school
- Accessing the school field at break and lunchtime to allow increased space for social distancing.

Staff are also managing additional workload at the moment, whether it is the office staff dealing with phone calls, kitchen staff managing deliveries and food supply (currently we are well stocked!) or teachers and teaching assistants having to prepare for possible closure.

At time of writing, there has been no direction for schools to close, but should there be an increase in staff being unable to come to work, the balance of school safety could start to change and partial or full closure may become necessary. If this happens, we will ensure parents are informed at the earliest possible opportunity, but could be at short notice. Each school has to assess for itself as to whether staff and pupils can be safe and every school across the country will have different levels of staffing according to the number of staff coming into work each day. Although Archbishop Sancroft and Harleston Primary Academies work very closely together, the number of staff we have absent in each of these schools is very different. This is why we are able to stay open whilst Mr Connelly has had to make the very difficult decision to close the high school from tomorrow as he does not have sufficient teachers to teach the children. I am very aware this could affect your decision to send in your primary age children if their brothers or sisters are not having to go to their high school. Please could I urge you to keep your primary aged child in school for as long as possible - having watched the lower school on the field throughout lunchtime today having so

much fun and enjoyment racing around with their friends, it saddens me to think that very shortly children will miss out on social contact and active outdoor play with their pals.

In the meantime, we all continue to work together to bring the best possible outcomes for your children. My thanks to everyone who has been so understanding and grateful to our staff for everything they are doing for the good of the children in the school. Your kind words, where they have been received, are very welcome and valued by our dedicated staff team.

I will continue with my daily updates so that you remain fully informed of what is happening in school.

With my best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. C. Foreman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and a distinct 'C'.

Mrs Foreman
Interim Headteacher