

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020

### **COVID – CLOSURE ANNOUNCEMENT**

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are so grateful to all parents and carers for staying up-to-date with the latest information. We understand for your children this is a hugely uncertain and enormously worrying time.

You will have heard the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Education announcements yesterday. Our school must follow their instructions. **Other than in the exceptions below, there will be no formal schooling in our building from Monday 23rd of March. Learning will continue to be provided at home.** Below is our interpretation of their words at this point. If things change we will update you:

#### **From Monday**

1. **Children who require additional support (those with an EHCP, are Looked After and In Care and those with an appointed social worker) and children of key workers** will be able to come to school each day should their parents and carers wish them to do so. This will be in place from Monday and this facility will be available during the Easter Holidays. Further details of this arrangement will be provided on Friday.
2. **Such students in the building will do the work set by staff – just as those at home. Our job will be to supervise, help and support any who remain with us after Monday.**

#### **Free School Meals from Monday**

We await more information from the government on the new national voucher scheme and will advise accordingly so that children in school on FSM and those at home on FSM can have access should this be requested. Further details will follow on Friday.

#### **Statutory Tests/Data collections**

The Secretary of State for Education said last night:

“I can confirm that we will not go ahead with assessments or exams, and that we will not be publishing performance tables for this academic year. We will work with the sector and have to ensure children get the qualifications that they need.”

Therefore, The Secretary of State has said that the examinations and assessments that go with them for the current Year 6 are cancelled (NOT postponed). This will be tremendously worrying for the children and you their parents and carers. Please be assured we will be working closely with the head teacher's from our feeder Secondary Schools, who we know very well and with whom we have a very

special and trusting relationship, to ensure they receive the information they need to best support your young person in the future.

As stated above, we will discuss this with Year 6 today and tomorrow and we will set up an email for your or their questions. You are also very welcome to write to us. At the moment, the Year 6 team are putting together transition documentation which includes all our data tracking and assessments ready to send onto our colleagues.

The cancellations will also apply to the Year 4 multiplication tests, Year 1 Phonics Screening Test, Year 2 SATS and Reception Good Level of Development, where data is usually submitted to the Department of Education and used to create performance tables.

### **Arrangements for at home learning**

On Friday your child will bring home an 'at home' learning pack. Within your child's learning pack will be things teachers believe will support their learning. In addition to tasks set, information about accessing various online activities will be provided. Teachers will upload ideas, activities and test tasks using our school website class pages. Please familiarise yourself with this so you can access the learning online.

In google, type Buckton Vale Primary School to gain access to our website and click on the tab. Find the pupil pages section and scroll down to your class. Your learning tasks will be uploaded on here daily.

TT Rockstars, Numbots, Numberfun songs, PhonicsPlay.co.uk and the times tables checker site can all be accessed at the bottom of the home page on the website.

As always, reading is absolutely essential and we encourage you to read as many books as possible whilst you are at home learning. Your teacher is likely to offer you some guidance on which reading to do. Can you carry out book reviews and share these with us?

With all this change comes tremendous uncertainty, which is a grieving experience. It is because grief, according to The Grief Recovery Institute, *'is the conflicting feelings that come at the end or change in a familiar pattern of behaviour.'* It is also a loss of our hopes, dreams and expectations.

When we think about all the cancellations, all the changes, all of the things that we don't get to do, all the places we don't get to go, our school routine stopped, the social distancing, not to mention the fear and threat to our health and well-being. It really is understandable that we are feeling overwhelmed and grieving. Please be kind to yourself and accept that whatever you are feeling is normal and a natural reaction to such losses.

### **So what can we do?**

- If you or your child is feeling worried, meditation is known to help. There are a number of online apps such as headspace and calm which offer free trials for at least 30 days.
- Keep in touch with us. Email us your photos or pieces of work, books you are reading and if you are experiencing difficulty and need help contact us at: - [together@bucktonvale.tameside.sch.uk](mailto:together@bucktonvale.tameside.sch.uk)  
For children and parents in reception please contact Mrs Lister in the usual way via Tapestry.
- Alternatively, send us a message via Twitter [@BucktonValePS](https://twitter.com/BucktonValePS) – we have created a new page especially. All comments must be positive! This is about keeping our spirits up.
- Exercise – can you make up some really fun exercises and share them with us? There are a number of people offering free online workouts at the moment. Have a look on Instagram.

- Be kind to yourselves and each other. Tell the people you love that you love them. Why not write them a letter?
- Write a list of things you are grateful for. Try to do this every day and really think about it. I had a sudden realisation a few weeks ago about how grateful I was for toothpaste. I know. I had obviously taken this for granted. The simple things in life really are the most important.

Finally,

If any of you are in a position to support the Local Community, Action Together have set up a webpage for people who are interested in volunteering to help out people who are in need. They are finding that many of the regular volunteers are self-isolating as they are elderly themselves. Yet the demand for voluntary and community services is increasing, including for Foodbanks.

If you are able to offer your support please log onto:-

<https://www.actiontogether.org.uk/volunteer/search-for-opportunities>

In the words of our Buckton Vale rap 'if we all stick together and help each other through there's endless possibilities' to what we each can do...'

Do remember 'this too shall pass.'

Please take care of yourselves and each other.

We will miss you all.

Mrs Brown and your Buckton Vale team



Headteacher