

NEWSLETTER

15.01.2021

2021

So, on my first day as Headteacher at Dr Walker's Church of England Primary School, I had to inform the community of the school's partial closure, due to the third national lockdown. What a start to 2021!

I am delighted to have been appointed as the new Headteacher for Dr Walker's Church of England Primary School. I am looking forward to getting to know parents, as well as pupils and staff to provide the best education possible in these difficult times.

I know that a successful and happy school depends on all of us working together and therefore the importance of effective communication is of paramount importance. Parents make an important contribution to their children's achievements at school, and I want to develop the relationship between the school and parents for everyone's benefit. I am looking forward to finding out more about the school so that the changes we make in this new chapter are supported by the whole school community in further developing the school's Good Ofsted grading.

My vision for Dr Walker's Church of England Primary School is to be a school where every child is loved, developed, and educated into becoming a successful British Citizen. For all pupils to succeed in reaching their God given potential at Dr Walker's - An Exceptional Place to Flourish, by:

- **Believing** in God, self and others by developing confidence, respect and trust;
- **Engaging** in a love for learning by nurturing curiosity and independence; and
- **Excelling** in reaching personal potential by being resilient and showing positive behaviour.

Our **CHRISTIAN VALUES** are reflected in:

- Standing with **COURAGE** for what is right.
- Using **CREATIVITY** in problem solving and making life beautiful.
- Treating every person and everything with **RESPECT**.
- Having **COMPASSION** for others.
- Completing every task with **PERSEVERANCE**.
- Taking **RESPONSIBILITY** for ourselves.
- Living with **HOPE** for a better future.

We all need **HOPE** in these difficult times, and we must continue to live with this **HOPE** for our community of Dr Walker's. I have faith that through all of this we will have courage and wisdom to deal with each set of challenges we are presented with as a strong community.

NEW STAFF:

I would like to welcome Mrs Platman as our new Bursar and Mrs Snow, Learning Support Staff in Reception (Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays).

LOCKDOWN

The new lockdown is because there is a new variant of Covid-19 that is spreading faster than others. This variant of the virus was first identified in Kent. Since early December it has increased rapidly in London, the East and the South East of England. Cases are still rising sharply in Greater Essex and hospitals across our region are near capacity. In the face of the rapidly rising numbers of cases across the country and intense pressure on the NHS, we now need to use every lever at our disposal to reduce contacts outside households wherever possible.

Success is not the key
to happiness.
Happiness is the key
to success.
If you love what you
are doing, you will be
successful.



*Love
the LORD your
God, obey Him,
and remain
faithful to Him.
For He is the key
to your life.*

*Deuteronomy
30:19-20*



Summary: what you can and cannot do during the national lockdown

You must stay at home. The single most important action we can all take is to stay at home to protect the NHS and save lives.

a) Leaving home

You must not leave, or be outside of your home except where necessary. You may leave the home to:

- shop for basic necessities, for you or a vulnerable person
- go to work, or provide voluntary or charitable services, if you cannot reasonably do so from home
- exercise with your household (or support bubble) or one other person, this should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.
- meet your support bubble or childcare bubble where necessary, but only if you are legally permitted to form one
- seek medical assistance or avoid injury, illness or risk of harm (including domestic abuse)
- attend education or childcare - for those eligible

If you do leave home for a permitted reason, you should always stay local - unless it is necessary to go further, for example to go to work. Stay local means stay in the village, town, or part of the city where you live.

b) Meeting others

You cannot leave your home to meet socially with anyone you do not live with or are not in a support bubble with (if you are legally permitted to form one).

You may exercise on your own, with one other person, or with your household or support bubble. This should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.

You cannot meet other people you do not live with, or have not formed a support bubble with, unless for a permitted reason.

Stay 2 metres apart from anyone not in your household.

c) Education

Colleges, primary and secondary schools will remain open only for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. All other children will learn remotely until February half term.

d) Remember: 'Hands. Face. Space.'

- **hands** – wash your hands regularly and for at least 20 seconds;
- **face** – wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet;
- **space** – stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings).



ATTENDANCE

The Prime Minister announced last week, that primary schools should move to remote provision, except for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. Please refer to the government's website for clarity on critical workers and vulnerable children.

The government's published guidance states:

- *“Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors.*
- *Schools should speak to parents and carers to identify who needs to go to school.*
- *If it proves necessary, schools can ask for simple evidence that the parent in question is a critical worker, such as their work ID badge or pay slip.*
- *Parents and carers who are critical workers **should keep their children at home if they can.**”*

It is important that we all take steps to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection in the community to save lives and protect the NHS. Please consider the safety of you and your household first and foremost.

School attendance needs to be kept to the minimum, to safeguard both staff and pupils alike. Limiting attendance is about reducing the number of contacts that all of us have with others. This will also affect critical workers and vulnerable pupils in the light of limited provision in the school.

The school has had an increase of requests this week to accommodate more pupils. We do NOT have capacity to accommodate large numbers and need to minimize this. If the school reaches a point where we deem it not viable to accommodate more pupils, we will take the guidance and advice of Essex County Council in potentially offering placement for your child at a neighbouring school.

Your support will be much appreciated to only revert to the offer of requesting the school to provide a place for your child(ren), if you have exhausted any other alternatives as critical worker.

We understand that these are unprecedented times but do need your co-operation and support in this matter to reduce contact and the spread of Covid-19.

Thank you to all the parents/carers who have completed the online google questionnaire. Please do inform the school of your intentions of sending your child(ren) into school prior to them attending.

CORONA VIRUS

The most important symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If anyone in school becomes unwell **with any of the above symptoms**, they will be sent home and be advised to follow the guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

This sets out that they must:

- self-isolate for at least 10 days
- arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19).

Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms or a positive test result must stay at home for the full isolation period. This is because they could pass it on to others, even if they do not have symptoms.

It may be difficult for some people to separate themselves from others in their household. Not all these measures will be possible if you are living with children or have caring responsibilities but follow this guidance to the best of your ability in these circumstances.

How is Corona-19 spread?

COVID-19 spreads from person to person through small droplets, aerosols and through direct contact. Surfaces and belongings can also be contaminated with COVID-19 when people with the infection cough or sneeze or touch them. The risk of spread is greatest when people are close to each other, especially in poorly ventilated indoor spaces and when people spend a lot of time together in the same room.

Social distancing, washing your hands and good respiratory hygiene (using and disposing of tissues), cleaning surfaces and keeping indoor spaces well ventilated are the most important ways to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

People who have COVID-19 can infect others from around 2 days before symptoms start, and for up to 10 days after. They can pass the infection to others, even if they have mild symptoms or no symptoms at all, which is why they must stay at home.

People who live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 are at higher risk of developing COVID-19. They could spread the disease to others even when feeling well, which is why they must stay at home.



We have purchased a sanitising misting machine to help with deep cleaning of the classroom. This will be done on a weekly basis.

REMOTE HOME LEARNING

Remote learning is not to be confused with digital learning. The school will continue to provide remote learning, this will take a blended form of signposting to appropriate web links, worksheet, video, etc.

Staff has been working hard in sorting resources and lessons.

Our school's Remote Home Learning document will be published online by the 25th of January.

I acknowledge that this is particularly challenging for many parents. Please support the school in making the best effort to provide the best remote home learning.

Staff will be in contact weekly as part of a welfare check. Teachers are also busy with parent consultations via phone calls to update you on your child(ren)'s progress last term, as this was outstanding.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Please contact the school if your child is entitled for Free School Meals. We have been providing meal parcels this week and will review this in the weeks to come, following updates from government and the Local Authority.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CORONAVIRUS(COVID-19) HELPLINE

The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline and the PHE Advice Service (option 1) is available to answer any questions you have about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education settings and children's social care.

Phone: 0800 046 8687
Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm
Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 6pm

CANCELLATION OF 2021 NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESMENT

STA recognise that due to the further disruption caused by this change, key stage 1 (KS1) and key stage 2 (KS2) national curriculum assessments cannot continue as intended.

The following assessments, scheduled between April and July 2021, have been cancelled:

- KS1 teacher assessments
- KS2 tests and teacher assessments
- phonics screening check
- all statutory trialling

These arrangements will apply for summer 2021 only, and STA are planning for a full programme of primary assessments to take place in the 2021/22 academic year. This will include the introduction of the statutory reception baseline assessment and multiplication tables check, as previously announced. STA will confirm full details for 2021/22 primary assessments in due course.

A NOTE ON ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS

As we are experiencing the winter months, a few useful reminders about our arrangements, should we need to close due to adverse weather.

Please be assured that we will endeavour to open and remain open wherever possible but do have to be mindful of Health & Safety both on site and importantly on the journey to and from school.

If we are faced with inclement weather before the start of school, a decision not to open it will be communicated to parents/carers via school text and/or email. Also please check twitter for any updates. It will also be broadcasted on radio stations Hearts Essex and BBC Essex.

Parents/carers can see the full list of closures on the Essex County Council website.

Website link: <http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Dates/Pages/Emergency-School-Closures.aspx>

Path:

- Visit Essex County Council's home page at www.essex.gov.uk
- Search for Emergency School Closure
- Or click the Education and School's area.
- Click Schools
- Click Dates
- Click Emergency Closures

The Emergency Closures page will update as and when notifications are received, therefore it is recommended to continue to check or refresh the page.

*Thank
you*



A big thank you for being so flexible and understanding regarding the third national lockdown and partial school closure. This has been two incredibly challenging weeks.

Best wishes,

Dr L Lawson
Headteacher