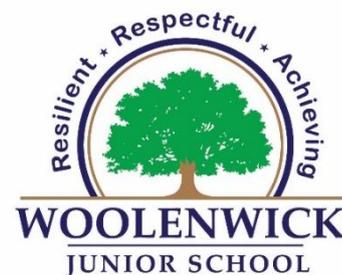


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Friday 8th January 2021

Dear Parents:

Welcome Back everyone! We have successfully managed to reach the end of week one. Well done!

There have been a number of emails and SchoolGateway messages which have done the rounds this week and a few other bits of information which I wanted to offer and collate.

Firstly, provision is in place for Key Worker/Vulnerable (KWV) children onsite and those signing-in remotely from the safety of their homes. With regards to provision this is certainly very different from the first Lockdown. I do appreciate that there have been some very mixed messages coming through from government officials, DfE, unions and the media and no doubt questions with the ever changing guidance. Therefore, my intention is to communicate what we are doing for our children and try to shed some light on where we are:

Key Worker and Vulnerable pupils (KWV):

- We have seen a significant uptake in the number of parents and carers requesting that their child/ren attend school for face-to-face learning as they are critical workers. As a result, we are at full capacity and no longer able to offer any further spaces to facilitate on-site learning. *We are now adding children to a waiting list.* I am aware that circumstances are changing for parents/carers and some have now been asked to come in whilst others have been furloughed. I would therefore ask parents to consider very carefully if their child could safely be accommodated at home owing to a change in circumstances. **The safest place to be is at home.** That is why the government have advised people to stay at home wherever possible. You should therefore only be requesting a place if it is essential. For example, if your **role is critical** and you are required to work and **there is nobody else in the household who can care for your child.**
- We have had parents who are finding it difficult to support their child with their learning requesting places in school. Please do what you can to support learning and engage with the class teacher if your child is unable to access the learning and finds it challenging. We cannot offer places due to the range of support available at home. The children coming onsite for learning will not be getting a “better” deal educationally. At present preparing, presenting and responding to home learning is very time consuming for our teachers. The children in school are being guided through the same or similar by our **staff and support staff** in much the same way as parents will be supporting children at home.
- It is important that we safeguard those coming on site and also ensure that they **do not become transmitters** for those who in the community. With statistics being so high, the more pupils we have the more risks there are of transmission and potentially Bubble closures. All the data for Hertfordshire cases can be found via the following link: <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/cases>
- It is government expectation that all children are learning either **remotely or on-site.** We are keeping **attendance registers for both** and contacting individuals where they have not attended. Please use the year group emails provided (see website) and contact your class teachers if you are experiencing difficulties to avoid being marked as absent from your online learning platform.

School Meals:

The DfE has confirmed that schools should be encouraged to continue to use existing catering arrangements whenever possible during lockdown and/or partial closure situations. Our meals are provided by HCL.



Therefore, any parents of children who are entitled to Free School Meals and are not on-site will be asked to come and collect food packages or packed lunches from school. Information relating to this will follow as we would need to collate numbers of parents who would be able to do so.

Note that at this time, we do not have information with regards to any vouchers on offer.

Live Lessons:

- There is currently no legal requirement for schools to deliver 'live' lessons, nor is there evidence that live teaching delivers higher quality outcomes for learners. The educational endowment foundation has undertaken some interesting research with regards to this and suggest the quality of remote teaching is more important than how lessons are delivered. We are doing all that we can to ensure that our lessons are of high quality, accessible and allow for engagement.
- Here at Woolenwick, we will be looking into live video sessions **starting on Monday**. A schedule was sent out previously and children will receive an invite from the class teacher. Parents will need to have given permission for their child to be invited and we would urge that if you have missed this correspondence you contact the school and arrange to either give permission or not.
- We will be reviewing the live lessons undertaken next week to see how well these have been received and the uptake.

Internet and technology:

Schools, trusts and local authorities can request mobile data increases for children and young people who:

- do not have fixed broadband at home
- cannot afford additional data for their devices
- are experiencing disruption to their face-to-face education

If you are falling into the category above, could I request that you email Mrs Birch on birchj@woolenwickjm.herts.sch.uk so that we can begin collating the information required to process this.

Please note that we **do not** currently have additional devices offered to the school to loan out. We may be receiving some but we cannot confirm how many we will receive or when this will be. If your child has no access to devices to undertake the online learning, you will already be on our system and we will do all that we can to get a device to you. If you have not informed the school, please arrange a call with our family liaison worker Jackie Birch to discuss your needs. We cannot guarantee that all requests will be granted and will treat individual cases on a priority basis.

Winter weather:

Finally, I would like to mention that we do have staff shielding, isolating or ill and there are a number of staff absences to cover. In addition, we do not have the school crossing patrol. I would ask that for Health and Safety reasons, all measures be taken to stay safe when entering or exiting the site. It is getting colder and surfaces may be quite slippery. Look out for frosty paths and please continue to **wear a mask on site at all times**, maintain a distance and avoid gathering at the gates for conversations to avoid other parents having to cross through you.

Kind regards

Ms T. Koser

Acting Headteacher

