

# EXWICK HEIGHTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Spring Term– March 27<sup>th</sup> 2020

Website: [www.exwickheights.devon.sch.uk](http://www.exwickheights.devon.sch.uk)

Access Diary Dates & all Newsletters on the Website

## Dear Parents & Carers

I wanted to write another email to properly thank you for the amazing response to keep our school community safe prior to schools closing on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March. As you will be aware, we are remaining open to support our Key Workers throughout this challenging time. I would like to thank everyone of those who are continuing to keep our country running, bravely putting others safety before their own.

We will be writing to parents and carers to assess the need for childcare on a weekly basis for as long as we are able to offer this service and enable those who require it to book sessions. This will include the Easter Holiday period. Childcare will only be provided for those where there is absolutely no alternative and the individuals hold what the Government have defined as a 'Key Worker Role'. Please can I be clear that these childcare places are intended for **families who have no other adult at home** to look after children **and who are immediately required in the response to this virus**.

**Coronavirus and Children's Questions:** With everything that is happening, children will naturally have questions. The following advice, which we have found on British Psychological Society website, seems sensible:

Talk openly to children and reassure them about the changes they are seeing around them due to Coronavirus.

Some of the changes, like people wearing face masks or empty supermarket shelves, can be scary for children, so they are likely to need to talk to someone they trust about it. The advice stresses that it is important to be truthful, but remember your child's age. Give them factual information, but adjust the amount and detail to fit their age. For example, you might say 'we don't yet have a vaccination for Coronavirus, but doctors are working very hard on it' or 'a lot of people might get sick, but for most people it is like a cold or flu and they get better'.

Other advice from the BPS' Division of Educational and Child Psychology includes:

- Allow children to ask questions: It is natural that children will have questions and worries about Coronavirus. Giving them the space to ask these questions and have answers is a good way to ease anxiety.
- Younger children might understand a cartoon or picture better than an explanation.
- It is ok to say you don't know - at the moment, there are questions we don't have answers to about Coronavirus.
- Maybe your child has an idea too – let them tell you or draw them.
- Try to manage your own worries: Uncertainty can make all of us feel anxious or worried. Identify other adults you can talk to about your own worries. Use techniques that help to make you feel a bit calmer - if you are at home, music, breathing and relaxation techniques, distraction (such as watching something funny), and time with family can all help.
- Give practical guidance: Remind your child of the most important things they can do to stay healthy but find motivation for keeping going, like thinking of a song they want to sing while washing their hands)

**Homelearning** I would like to thank you all for trying your best to support your children during this period of school closure. We recognise that it can be very challenging to work **at** home (for adults as well as children!) and want to reassure you that everything you are doing will help your child. Please do not feel anxious if you find a particular area of learning more challenging or if you have been unable to access a particular element of the work set. The challenges you are experiencing will be faced by parents and carers up and down the country. Children all learn at different rates and the team here at school will be able to support them, whatever they have achieved at home, when they return. Our aim is to help you all to have a little bit of routine and to help the children maintain their hard work this year. The period of disruption is bound to impact nationwide – all any of us can do is our best and we do not want you to feel anxious about your child's education.

Mr Emerton sent the following message (over the page) by Schoolcomms on Wednesday with regard to some of the common challenges faced when accessing learning online. I apologise for repeating this message but I felt it was useful information:

## Accessing Wonde Dashboard from Home

We have had a number of requests asking for help to access the Wonde Dashboard. If you are experiencing problems, then there are a number of help articles on the school blog. The overwhelming majority of requests coming through can be solved by following those help guides. The links are below. If the help guides do not fix the problem then please email your query to: [passwords@tedwraggtrust.co.uk](mailto:passwords@tedwraggtrust.co.uk) and we will endeavour to help you as soon as we can. This is now the only way of contacting me to request for technical help.

Accessing Wonde and Google Classroom from home - <https://exwickheightsblog.co.uk/accessing-wonde-and-google-classroom-from-home>

Is Espresso asking you for login details? - <https://exwickheightsblog.co.uk/is-espresso-asking-you-for-log-in-details>

Incognito Mode / Safe Browsing (Our recommendation is that you always use this when accessing Wonde) - <https://exwickheightsblog.co.uk/incognito-mode-safe-browsing>

Using a Chromebook at home and can't get on to Google Classroom? - <https://exwickheightsblog.co.uk/using-a-chromebook-at-home-and-cant-get-on-to-google-classroom>

**Homelearning Over Easter** During the usual holiday period, daily lessons will not be posted in the Classroom section of Wonde. However, all of the apps will still be accessible to your children. Further to this, we will post homelearning activities onto the Classroom area of Wonde (instead of the school blog) for the two week holiday period.

### Staffing

**Business Manager Retirement:** With the end of term arriving earlier than we had expected, I have not been able to share the sad news that our amazing Business Manager, Mrs Julie Treleaven will be retiring. Julie has been a core part of our team at Exwick Heights Primary, joining the school when Foxhayes First School and Exwick Middle School first amalgamated. She has been such an amazing colleague, offering calm and support at all times! She was due to retire at the end of this term, ready to enjoy time with her family and a relaxing holiday. Her plans have obviously had to be re-evaluated in this current situation and so I was delighted (and very relieved) that Mrs Treleaven has kindly offered to defer her retirement for two months, to enable her to provide business support through this crisis. Her decision is an incredibly generous and selfless one and I am completely humbled by it. Thank you so much, Mrs Treleaven!

**Deputy Head Teacher:** Another amazing colleague, Mrs Emma Slaven, will also sadly be leaving Exwick Heights at the end of this academic year. Emma has worked hard to gain her Headteacher qualification over the last few years and is now ready for a new challenge. It is with great pride (and considerable sadness) that I am announcing that Emma Slaven has been successfully awarded the position of Headteacher of St Leonards Primary School. Emma has been a fantastic deputy and richly deserves this promotion. I'm sure you will join me in congratulating her – she will be an amazing Headteacher!

As both of these announcements are events which we have been well prepared for, I want to reassure you that I will be sharing our succession plan with you early in the summer term.

**Keep Safe:** Finally, I just want to send you all our very best wishes. Please keep yourselves as safe as you can during this challenging period. We are missing seeing you all.

Best wishes,



Mrs C Neal  
**Headteacher**