



# NEWSLETTER

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021

[www.dedham.essex.sch.uk](http://www.dedham.essex.sch.uk)

Telephone: 01206 322242

## Head Talk

Dear families of Dedham CE Primary School,

I do hope that you and your family are well and dealing with the very challenging circumstances that we are all living through once again. Just as through the school closure to most children last year, I intend to continue with a weekly newsletter to ensure that I have a regular line of communication to you all.

The speed at which things have changed this week has given us all many challenges to overcome. Although heart-breaking that we find our school only partially open, I firmly believe it was necessary. The prevalence of Coronavirus in our community is abundantly clear. Currently, we have three staff, one pupil and a number of families who have returned positive test results during the Christmas break. I am sure you will join with me in sending them our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Our provision for children of critical workers and vulnerable children has in excess of fifty children attending. This is significantly higher than last time and we are all grateful for the important work that critical workers are doing. I must reiterate that you should only send your children to this group if you are eligible and not able to keep them at home. The key to the success of this lockdown is the reduction in contacts for us all.

Already, 95% of children are accessing their online learning resources shared on Tapestry and Seesaw. Staff will be teaching their year group's curriculum whilst remote learning takes place so thank you for supporting your child's learning at home. We know that many of you are juggling work with childcare and other difficulties at this time. This makes the levels of engagement in remote learning all the

more pleasing. Our offer for remote learning is constantly reviewed and I am grateful for any feedback so that we can continue to improve it further. Some parents have requested that work be posted the evening before. After marking, responding and adapting lessons based on work submitted, teachers have reported that they are often preparing new content into the evenings making this very difficult. However, we have agreed that work will be available from 7:00am each day.

The teaching staff are keen to try to bring some live face-to-face interaction to the school week, for example scheduling a story time with classes. Today, Miss Valentine successfully trialled this with Class 5 using Microsoft Teams and 22 children joined in a class quiz which I'm sure you can imagine caused lots of excitement! She has received lots of positive feedback from children and families about the experience and so we hope to be able to roll this out across the school in the next week once we've ironed out a few technical issues.

I know that a number of families are finding it challenging sharing devices amongst all family members and so please be assured that we will always try to ensure that any live sessions are timetabled to avoid clashes between classes.

My very best wishes to you all,

Mr David Larnar  
Headteacher



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## **Welfare/Remote Learning support calls from your child's teacher**

During this time, we will again be making regular telephone contact with families to check in with you and your child. We have already started phoning families to support with accessing remote learning. Of course, we are also able to contact each other more regularly through Tapestry and the Seesaw Family App. Please do remember that we are here to support you so do not hesitate in contacting your child's teacher, the school office or me if we can be of any help.

## **Amended letter from Clare Kershaw, Director of Education for Essex**

I have attached an amended version of the letter I shared yesterday. The amendment is in the exam section which is not relevant to children at our school.

## **Christmas Themed Non-uniform Day – 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

A big thank you for your generous donations for the Christmas Themed non-uniform day on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020. You have raised £137.00 for the Parent Group. Thank you.

## **Breakfast Club payments**

If you paid for this half term's Breakfast Club in December this payment has been banked. These payments will be credited to your child(ren) when Breakfast Club reopens, and this be deducted from your new invoice. Thank you.

## **Lunch money**

If your child is attending school as a key worker/vulnerable child, payment for school

dinners can be sent in with your child (cash, or cheques made payable to Essex County Council).

## **Free school meals – Have your circumstances changed?**

If you believe your circumstances have changed during the period of lockdown and you could be eligible for free school meals then you can find the criteria and application process by following the link below;

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/free-school-meals>

## **Primary School Applications for September 2021 – Closing date is 15<sup>th</sup> January**

**The closing date for applications is 15th January 2021. Please ensure your application is submitted on time.** Applications can be made via the website [www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions)

## **News from St Mary's Church, Dedham**

We now have a dedicated page on our website where you can find out more about upcoming services and events at St Mary's Church, Dedham. It can be found at the link below;

<https://www.dedham.essex.sch.uk/news-from-st-marys-church-dedham>