Ardeley St Lawrence C of E Primary School

**Newsletter**

 22nd January 2020

Dear Parents

**Good news…**

This week we started our ‘zoom’ meetings for KS1 children, time to see each other, hear a story and share some news. It was so lovely to see the children; we really do miss them. These meetings were set up in response to discussions we had with some parents about their children missing interactions with their friends and feeling sad. We hope these cheered them up – they certainly cheered us up!

Staff have chosen a ‘Star of the Week’ each, recognising the immense effort being put in by the children at home and at school, as we cannot currently run our merit system. I will announce these each week in my recorded assembly on YouTube and we will email you a certificate you can print out and fill in.

This week’s stars are: Indie, Chloe, Tobie and Harley

and I explain why in my recorded assembly. I would love to read a prayer or intercession in my assembly each week written by one of the children. If they would like to do this please email it in to admin@ardeley.herts.sch.uk with the heading FOR ASSEMBLY. Thank you.

 **Home Learning…**Our two schools continue to run, side by side and overlapping!
Of course it is always difficult to judge the amount of work we deliver when working remotely. I know my teachers worry about it – it is so hard to replicate school; those multiple small interactions and responses we see and act on throughout the day, that tell us what to repeat, when to move on, who has got it, who needs help, those wonderful ‘light bulb moments’.

We have heard from some of you who are finding it too much and some of you who would like more work. We are very conscious that every family has different stresses and pressures. We know some of you can commit all day to home learning, some of you have to juggle siblings and internet access and some of you are trying to work from home too. The children also respond differently, some enjoying every lesson, some wanting to chat to friends, some trying to come up with excuses to avoid tasks (don’t worry this happens at school too!). We have kept our remote learning offer (which can be found on the ‘Covid 19 – Information for parents’ page of the website), as flexible as possible for all of these reasons.

**Other Activities…**

Our ‘Learning Links for use at home’ can be used to supplement children’s learning.
However, the younger children are, the less ‘screen time’ they should have and this is a concern around remote learning, particularly for KS1 and EYFS although we know it is a concern for KS2 too.
This was discussed in Webinar I attended this week with the Chartered College of Teaching and I am looking to improve our offer in this area – sharing more links and ideas for activities away from the screen. This isn’t about replacing online learning with workbooks, it is about children using their home environments and bodies to learn, keeping active and balancing their mental health.
I will let you know as I add content that might be helpful. I am also mindful that offering activities like ‘bake a cake’ may not be particularly useful to those of you working – so I will try to think of things that the children can do independently or maybe with a small bit of help to set them going!

**Thank you…**

I would also like to thank my part time staff who have offered to work extra hours this week to keep the school open to the children of Critical Workers. We, like every workplace, have staff isolating and staff unable to work because they are clinically vulnerable or unwell. Without the commitment and flexibility of these staff we may have had to close on the Thursday. We continue to strive to do our best, as the small team we are, to keep both schools (remote and critical worker) operating to the best of our ability.

**Testing…**

Shortly staff will be offered a twice weekly ‘Lateral Flow Test’ to carry out at home. These tests give a result within 30 minutes and are designed to pick up people who may have the virus but not showing any symptoms. They are already in use in the NHS and care homes. If a test returns positive we will then track close contacts and close a bubble as before. If we have any more useful information for you regarding this scheme I will share it as soon as I can. There are no plans currently to test Primary age children.

If your child is attending our provision as you are a critical worker, please remember to inform us of any positive test results (LFT or PCR) or symptoms in your family. Please email covid@ardeley.herts.sch.uk

**Finally…**

Finally, at the moment I think everyone is having good days and not such good days…so I will leave you with this quote:

“Courage doesn’t always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says ‘I’ll try again tomorrow’”.

With all my best wishes,

Mrs Connolly