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Friday 24th April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that you have all had a good week. I was reading earlier on today that the children have only missed 15 days of school but I'm sure it seems a lot longer than that (it certainly does for us!)

I hope that you've all seen the videos that the class teachers have produced for the children, if you haven't yet seen these they are on the **Year Group** pages – the staff will be putting up new videos each week for the children. I've had a lot of positive comments from parents about these videos and how appreciative families and children have been.

COVID-19 Update

Over the course of the week, we've seen a number of news articles about the lifting of the lockdown and suspected dates on when schools will be asked to reopen. However, there remains no official information on the reopening of schools. It was reported at the weekend that the 11th May was being proposed as a date however this was denied by the government and, as much as I want the children back in school, I personally would have very real concerns around the difficulties that we will face, especially if we are asked to continue a form of social distancing (not exactly sure how this would work in a class of 30 children!)

In the meantime, we all continue to do our bit to support the COVID-19 effort and our children. On that subject, I was particularly impressed to read about some of our children and families making laundry bags for NHS staff and you can read the full story on the **News – Launder for Victory** article on our school website.

School Closure: Educational Provision

The teachers have prepared work for the children next week and these have already been uploaded to the school website courtesy of the very efficient Mr Taylor; these can be found on the **Year Group** pages and also the **School Closure: Educational Provision** page.

In addition to this set work, there are also optional **Family Challenges** that you can complete and send in the results. I know that Mr Taylor was very impressed with the creative outcomes from the **Junk Modelling Challenge** that we set last week and these can all be seen on our website. There is a new challenge today, once again set by Mr Taylor and we look forward to seeing the results!



Please also keep an eye on our **School Closure: Web Links** and **School Closure: Virtual Trips** pages on our website for additional activities, which we are continually updating.



I would reiterate that the most important thing is your children's safety and wellbeing. Please do not attempt too much and certainly not anything which is going to cause anxiety (yours and theirs!) Finally, be assured that none of us are getting it right all the time – even those of us who are qualified teachers and doing the job for nearly 20 years!

[New Staff](#)

Before the lockdown began, we interviewed and appointed three new members of staff and we were very pleased to have them join our staff team this week. They are Faith Harvey (Teaching Assistant) who will be supporting across Year 1 and 2; Helen Sopp (Teaching Assistant) who will be joining the Year 6 team and Clare Readman (School Business Manager) who will be covering Jess Haigh's maternity leave. I'm sure you join me in welcoming them all to Bridge School at this strangest of times.

[Parental Consultations](#)

Year 1 and 2 parental consultations are taking place next week and those of you with children in these year groups should have received an email via Parent Mail to book a time slot. Please note that we will be using the phone numbers that you have all provided the school so I'm hoping that no one has changed their number and not told us!

Parental Consultations for the rest of the school (those that were booked in for the Wednesday evening) will take place w/c 4th May and those parents will receive a Parent Mail early next week.

Obviously, given the current situation, the teachers are only able to discuss the children's progress up until lockdown but I hope that you find them valuable nonetheless.

[Year 5 Parent Meeting re: Transfer to Secondary School](#)

Normally, at this time of year, I hold a couple of sessions for parents of Year 5 children to discuss the process of transferring to secondary school (PESE) and the Kent Test (also known as the 11+). I still plan to hold these sessions but these will take place via Zoom on Wednesday 6th May at 4pm and a second session on Thursday 7th May at 9am.

These will take the form of a short presentation and there will then be the opportunity to ask questions. Given the logistics involved it would be very helpful if any questions were emailed to me in advance and then I can answer them in my presentation. Parents can still ask questions 'live' but I will ask parents to submit their questions via 'chat'.

If you would like to join one of these sessions, please email me (headteacher@bridge.kent.sch.uk) and I will send you the details and password for the Zoom session. I will also be recording the Zoom meeting and publishing it on the school website.

[Year 5 Residential to Bore Place](#)

As mentioned in previous newsletters, this has been cancelled. The financial situation is a little complicated as parents were paying for both the Bore Place (May) and PGL (September) residential trips.

Those parents who had already paid in full have had their money refunded and I have already contacted these parents via email earlier in the week. If you were still following the payment plans then all monies have been transferred from the Bore Place trip to the PGL trip. No one has had any money deducted and no one has 'lost' any money.

I appreciate that finances will be a challenge in the coming months and we will be looking to re-structure the payments for the PGL trip in September to support our families.

Year 6 PGL Update

Just a reminder that we still hope for this to go ahead and that it has been rescheduled for the second weekend in July (Friday 10th to Monday 13th.)

Year 6 Production

It is with a heavy-heart that we have made the decision that regardless of when we get back to school, we will not be able to perform our planned production of School of Rock. I'm sure that this will not come as a surprise to you but that makes it no less disappointing.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Tibbles". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

James Tibbles