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Dear Parents/Carers,

Although we have remained open to provide childcare for vulnerable children and the children of key workers, Burtonwood School has been a very quiet place in the past two weeks. Under normal circumstances, we would have been buzzing with excitement and activity and enjoying our Easter events. It has been sad to see empty classrooms instead, but we are glad that so many of you are able to follow government guidance and keep children safely at home where at all possible.

From the uploaded work, messages and videos brightening up our days, you are doing a fantastic job supporting your children with the home learning activities set by their teachers. Over the next two weeks, in what would have been the Easter holiday, we will be giving the children a well-deserved break from school work and we hope that you enjoy some fun family time together. From 20th April, we will start to set work again.

We have had some queries about refunds for cancelled trips and residentials. Please be assured that these are in hand. Once funds have been released for each trip, each ParentPay account must be credited individually and, like many online systems at the moment, ParentPay is subject to heavy traffic and delays in response. Our office staff will not be in school during what would have been our designated Easter holiday so the majority of refunds will be credited in the following weeks. Thank you for your patience in the meantime.

Staff will be taking their holiday weeks on a rota basis. Your child's class teacher will notify you if their holiday weeks fall outside of the next two weeks, in which case arrangements will be made for any queries about work to be directed to another teacher. As there will not be staff in the school office until 20th April, telephone messages will be picked up by teachers within school each day. Please direct any very urgent communication between now and 20th April to my own email address which is burtonwood_head@omegamat.co.uk.

All families with children eligible for free school meals should shortly receive £30 of e-Vouchers from Wonde for the holiday period. Although

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the recently announced government scheme does not cover the holiday period, Warrington Borough Council and Omega Multi-Academy Trust are committed to providing vouchers to support families during this time. Initially, the Wonde vouchers could only be purchased to the value of £2.30 per meal, however, they have now raised the limit to £3 per meal, in line with the government vouchers for £15 per week. We will notify parents and carers whether we continue with Wonde, or switch to the government scheme, following the holiday period.

To keep you updated, I have included below a link to current government guidance for parents and carers on the closure of schools:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

Here are some useful resources to support you in keeping children safe online, explaining the situation to them, and looking after their and your own mental health:

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/cco-childrens-guide-to-coronavirus.pdf>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Support-tools/support-your-child-at-home/>

<http://happyoksad.warrington.gov.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/876989/Easy_read_looking_after_your_feelings_and_body.pdf

These are anxious and difficult times. Please let us know if you need further information or we can offer any support.

I hope the Easter bunny has had the email about social distancing, but still brings lots of treats to the children and they enjoy their holiday.

Wishing you and your loved ones a very safe and happy Easter,

Heather Muttock
Head Teacher

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