

# The Federation of Boldmere Schools

## Cofield Road · Sutton Coldfield · B73 5SD

***Our Vision: The Federation of Boldmere Schools empowers all children to embrace learning; achieve their personal best; and build their social, emotional and physical wellbeing.***

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

We hope that everyone is safe and well and observing the lockdown rules and social distancing measures currently in place. We all know the importance of following this advice and the impact that our actions can have on the spread of COVID-19.

It is a very strange time and as we enter the second week of school closure, we hope that parent/carer tutors are bearing up well! We are pleased that everyone is pulling together and doing their bit to protect the NHS by STAYING AT HOME!

We expect that in many households, the first week of school closure may have been more like a holiday. However, if children are not to get bored and fractious, as they often do by the second week of the summer holidays, some sort of routine and structure is important and is needed during home learning. A Parent Factsheet, courtesy of The Key (usually subscription) is attached to our newsletter this week. We hope that this will help parents and carers consider how best to structure home learning. However, this is just advice and how home learning is carried out will depend on home circumstances.

Although school is currently closed, we are providing emergency child care for some families where both parents are key workers. We originally offered places to 23 families but we are pleased to say that most have since found alternative ways to keep their children at home. This is by far the best way to ensure everyone's safety and reduce the spread of the Coronavirus. We thank those parents who have put arrangements in place in order for their children to remain at home.

As a result, we have fewer children attending our emergency provision. This in turn is helping protect school staff by allowing many to work at home. Our cleaning team has also reduced significantly, so it is incredibly helpful that we are only providing school provision to a handful of pupils. In addition we have taken the action to close our school kitchen due to the reduction in kitchen staff. We are clearly not operating as usual. We want to say a huge THANK YOU to everyone staying at home during this lockdown situation. You are definitely helping to save lives.

However, teachers still want to make sure that their children are well and safe! Over the next two weeks, your child's teacher will make contact to ensure that home learning is going well (hopefully!) and that you are accessing all the resources provided on the school website and of course to say hello to the children! Please be patient, this contact will take place as regularly as we can.

We shall be updating the website today 30<sup>th</sup> March, 14<sup>th</sup> April and thereafter, every two weeks. This week's updates include.....

For each year group you will find the following home learning resources;

- Suggested activity grids for maths, reading, writing and foundation subjects/topic. These will be updated along with the Summer 1 overview on 27th April.
- Useful website list which has been updated this week as many websites are now offering free subscriptions.
- Suggested links to activities and worksheets on the website Twinkl, which is currently offering a month's free subscription.

Whole school suggested activities (ideal for families who have children in the Infants and Juniors);

- Whole school project on the continent Australasia (we will have a new continent when we update website fortnightly). Please refer to the Infants project overview which has some suggested activities for you to start the project.

- A wellbeing activity focusing on the positives!

Please do keep an eye on the school website but also follow the school Twitter account for further information.

Looking ahead, it seems quite uncertain as to when schools will open for “business as usual”. We are sure, like us, you will hope that this comes sooner rather than later, however we will be following the latest Government advice, then basing decisions in school on the well-being and safety of the Boldmere community.

In the event that we are unable to open until the end of April, May or even further into the Summer term, we shall continue to send school Newsletters each week and provide regular updates for parents and carers, as often as we can.

One final point to consider is that staff will not be responding to individual emails or Twitter comments from parents. If parents do have queries, please send them to the enquiry email address. We will reply if necessary and will forward any message, if appropriate, to specific staff, who will then respond accordingly. We would like to stress however that negative comments posted on Twitter are not helpful. We are sure that most parents at Boldmere know how hard working and dedicated our staff are and comments that staff should have made contact with families last week when children had only been at home for 5 days, is in our opinion, quite unreasonable.

We have a duty of care to our staff, as well as to our Boldmere children and families. We are working hard to put new school systems in place as a result of the unprecedented school closure. Please bear with us.

Finally, and on a very interesting point.... we have heard many parents on social media saying “I don’t know how teachers do it!” and “Teachers should get paid more!!” Well, we do this job because we love it. Let’s hope we can resume normal schooling soon.

Keep safe, enjoy the sunshine in your garden and treasure this quality time with your children. Make new memories, work on tasks together, help them with their learning and listen to how they think. You already know that your children are quite marvellous little people. These are strange times, however, we now have time to spend with our children. Children grow up so quickly, but we can enjoy special moments during these unprecedented times.

Stay safe everyone. Stay indoors, protect the NHS, and save lives.

Yours sincerely

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Executive Head

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Head of School

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