



Spring 2 Week 6

Friday 3rd April 2020

End of Spring Term- Letter for Families

Please check Whole School & Class Story at Class Dojo for any updates over the coming weeks.

Shares- pictures/ videos will be posted on Twitter at @ValewoodPrimary.

Dear Families,

After Week 2 of School Closure- Officially, End of Spring Term 2

We have got to the end of another week, post school closure. Two weeks on and there has been much work going on at home and at school. As you all know, our priority has been to secure the childcare for those families where both parents have no other option than to go to work. Therefore, School will be open over the Easter/ Spring Break for those families who are eligible for childcare. Thank you to our families who have now submitted both parents' registration forms. Thanks, too, to our staff who are able to work flexibly, on a rota basis, to accommodate the families' needs.

Childcare in School, Heart-Felt Thanks

I have to tell you that that our children, this week (as they were last week) have been magnificent. I speak daily with the staff and they have reported the most wonderful tales of children being so positive, friendly and creative. I have also received the most heart-warming messages of thanks from parents who are, understandably, torn- having to leave their children at School to go to work, as they are frontline workers. They know their children are in safe hands at School and they appreciate the part we are playing in enabling them to play theirs. These messages are all very humbling and we thank all of our critical workers for their sacrifices at this very challenging time.

Facing Challenging Times

For all the families now in lockdown at home; where parents/ carers are trying to work from home maybe and also doing their best with home learning, as I posted on Whole School Dojo last week, please know that I do not underestimate the challenges that you are all facing. I am conscious that the ever-increasing number of deaths reported on the news can be very difficult to come to terms with, especially when you are trying to shield children from these alarming, daily updates. Children are like sponges and we need to be as calm as possible- easier said than done, I know, when families are unable to spend any length of time out of the house. We can, however, choose how much news to listen to and, if we can plan to include positive elements into each of our days, this will certainly help- especially as the children may not understand why they are not allowed to go out and about. Finding your own rhythm over the coming weeks is important. Do not waste time worrying about what the 'Joneses' are up to! Staying home and keeping safe are the most important things we can all do, at the moment.

If you or your family members are anxious, **Young Minds** provides great resources, should you require them. They can be found online: Instagram/ Twitter and on their website at youngminds.org.uk.

Five Ways To Wellbeing

Over the coming weeks I encourage you all to remember our 'Five Ways to Wellbeing': #Take Notice/ #Connect/ #Give/ #Keep Learning/ #Be Active. We talk about these in School where we also weave them in our VPS Values:

V- Value Personal Strengths (our VPS School motto!)

A- Aspire to be the best we can be...

L- Love our learning...

U- Understand one another...

E- Enjoy what we do...which then leads to...

S- Success! (Ask the children which one is my favourite, let's see if they remember!)

#Take Notice

I must congratulate you all on your continued efforts and positivity, over the past week. I continue to 'take notice' of all that you are doing. I continue to receive lovely photos and messages from parents/ carers and from teachers showing that YOU HAVE GOT THIS! Remember, it's not a competition and it's not a race. I understand that you all have differing considerations. Nobody could have predicted a couple of weeks ago what we are now facing. Be kind to yourselves as well as to each other. Only do what you can, when and how you can.

#Keep Learning

There are many things that we can all do, to help in these challenging times, to help us to 'keep learning'. Miss Clark today has kindly uploaded suggested activities for families to do over the Spring/ Easter holiday which I hope you will find useful. These activities are not compulsory but moreover, we hope, might spur some creativity which is a great distraction. Our weekly, home learning planners will continue to be shared from w/b April 20th.

#Connect

A little music is sometimes all that is needed. Music, I believe, is one of the best distractions. And, if you can have a dance, too, it will certainly lift the mood. Mrs O'Brien has already compiled a Spotify playlist for all our staff which my teenage girls are already tired of listening to! Maybe you could compile your own Spring/ Easter Break playlist to enjoy, share and 'connect' with your family and friends? I am sure they would appreciate it. Keep up the great work everyone and keep the shares coming. I am very proud of you all.

#Be Active

Exercise is another definite mood-changer. I know many of you (us included) have been logging on, each morning, to have a daily workout with #PEWithJoe. Keep up the positive mental attitude everyone. I, too, have tried hard to make time this week and I have started my yoga practice again (after a three week break) which has really helped me to stay grounded. Whatever it is you prefer, try to build the exercise into your daily/ weekly routines. I have seen and heard that our school gymnasts are still 'being active' in their gym sessions (albeit online) which is fantastic! Keep the exercise and activity going- it really does cheer you up!

#Give

Last night at 8pm we again showed our gratitude to our NHS and keyworkers. Giving them a round of applause doesn't touch the sides. If you have family/ friends/ neighbours who are working hard at the frontline, why not 'give' them a note of thanks or paint a picture of a rainbow to put up in your/ their window. These messages and paintings have given people in our local communities much hope and joy and have certainly brightened up the day of passers-by who are out for their once-only, outdoor, daily exercise. This week, our children have painted rainbows for St. Jude's Care Home in Blundellsands. I know the residents there will be grateful for these.

Over the last two weeks, I have been inundated with messages and photographs from families in each class. Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to share comments and thanks re: communication/ updates and the home learning weekly tasks that teachers are sharing on Class Dojo each Monday. You are all very welcome. I will continue to do my best to keep you updated, as best I can, whilst all the time recognising your individual circumstances.

I hope you all manage to get some rest over the coming days. I hope that you all keep safe and well in the coming weeks and months. Whatever your circumstances are, all the staff and governors at VPS are sending you all our love and gratitude.

With every good wish, from my home to yours,
Helen Tantouri

P.S. It would have been Easter Bonnet/ Hat Parade today. Why not make a hat/ bonnet to wear and have your own parade at home? Photos on Twitter to come. Well done children! 😊

PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF THE LATEST GOVERNMENT ADVICE:

Coronavirus (COVID-19) What you need to do:

1. Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home).
2. Stay at least 2 metres (6ft) away from other people.
3. Wash your hands as soon as you get home.

N.B. You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

Handwashing Advice: The most important thing individuals can do to protect themselves is to wash their hands more often, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and water. Public Health England recommends that in addition to handwashing before eating, and after coughing and sneezing, everyone should also wash hands after using toilets and whenever you return home.

The latest guidance and video on hand washing can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>