



Worthington Primary School

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"We Only Reach for The Highest"

Thursday 7th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

What a very busy few days it has been - and not just in school, as I am sure you have been extremely busy too. When we were all given the news on Monday night about the partial closure of schools, it was somewhat out of the blue (certainly for me), as Government officials had been saying right up to Monday evening that schools would remain open, as they were "completely safe". Against this backdrop, it has taken a few days for my staff to fully put into place our curriculum offer as well as our remote interface with children currently not in school. All our staff members have been incredible busy throughout the last few days and indeed months. All of the staff were ready for work on Wednesday, which has enabled me to open school as fully as possible – this certainly has not been the case everywhere. I want to publically thank them enormously for this response – they really do all put your children before themselves. They are all determined to provide the very best education for every child but this is becoming an increasingly difficult task.

Unlike the last lockdown, we have a far higher number of children in school, with almost 50% of our school population in at the moment. That is a delight for us but clearly this was not what the government's intention was; as Public Health Trafford explained to me yesterday, "if children can stay at home, they really should". This is in response to the rapid rise in infection in the local area, as well as across the nation. They are deeply concerned about the new variant of Covid, which has yet to fully hit our area. Trafford has the highest rate of Covid infection within the Greater Manchester region and they believe this rate will only get worse.

With so many children in school at the moment, every member of staff is fully employed in school each day (and working every night and at weekends), balancing the preparation of, and feedback on, work for those in school and for those children not in school. I am concerned that on the one hand our staff want to provide everything to everyone, but none of them is Wonder Woman or Superman, and we have to be realistic about the level of teacher support that can be afforded to children who are being home educated. Every school is working under a different set of circumstances at the moment, and this determines the level of 'online' support that can be provided. (The school my wife works at is providing live Teams lessons but at the moment has less than 30 children attending from a school pupil population of 1,400. This allows every teacher to either teach face to face or online – not both.)

In order for us to engage with the children at home more fully, the staff last night planned a series of weekly Zoom meetings, ranging from wellbeing catch ups, story time, and/or work feedback sessions depending on the age of the children. These Zoom sessions will begin to be sent to you this week via your email, ready for a start next week. They will enable all of the children to virtually meet and hopefully, those not in school will feel closer to their friends and their teacher.

Yesterday, I sent you all an invite for Friday's Zoom Whole School Assembly and asked you not to have your video engaged. Since then I have agreed a Code of Conduct for the use of Zoom sessions with the staff, and I have attached this to this letter. If you engage with the Zoom sessions (and we really hope you do), then you do so adhering to the attached Code. Please read this through with your child, so that they understand the need to follow it. If you enter Friday's assembly, you can now start the video link, which means that children (however distant) can see each other.

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Video Conferencing

Code of Conduct for Parents and Children

Whilst our school is closed for many of our children, teachers will be using video conferencing (Zoom) to offer **wellbeing opportunities for the children to meet with their class and teacher**. Please be aware that this is a whole class meeting and everyone in the class is invited to attend. However this is just an invitation, there is no expectation that children have to join in.

It is really important that we have a 'code of conduct' in place to ensure everyone stays safe and enjoys using Zoom.

Please read the guidelines below and be aware that if you join a school organised 'Zoom' chat, you are agreeing to abide by this code of conduct.

- Do not publicise the meeting's link on any social media. This is a private meeting. The link to the meeting will be emailed to you by your teacher/school office and must not be shared with anyone else.
- Parents are responsible for supervising their child during the meeting and should ensure that their child follows the ground rules as explained by the teacher at the start of the meeting.
- Video conferences must be held in a safe and appropriate place with no bedrooms or inappropriate objects/information visible.
- Everyone must be appropriately dressed (e.g. no nightwear or swim wear).
- No recordings must be made.
- Ensure as little background noise as possible (e.g. turning the tv off) or if asked, to mute the sound.
- Everyone attending the meeting must show kindness and good listening as well as sharing their ideas/experiences.
- The meeting is a time for the children to connect with each other and with their teacher/teaching assistant.
- Parents are invited to attend but are respectfully asked to allow the children and the teaching staff to use the time to chat and talk to each other. If a parent has a question, this would be most appropriately addressed through the home learning email.
- No other child from the family should be on the call, only the child whose class meeting it is should be present.

- For younger children who may not usually access social media we want to be really clear that this is a very special use of social media and only being used as an extension to school during this school closure.
- Always be aware that some children are learning within school and may also be part of the Zoom call. Children in school will abide by the code of conduct, just as children at home will.
- This Code of Conduct is an addition to our E - Safety Policy, we will not tolerate any form of e-bullying or unkindness and we will take action, according to school policy, should this arise.

By joining a school organised video conference call you are agreeing to abide by this Video Conferencing Code of Conduct.

Please be aware that whilst we have taken every measure we can to ensure the video conference is as secure and safe as it can be, we cannot guarantee this.

Parents therefore take responsibility for their children accessing this platform.

Yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Searle', written in a cursive style.

Mr. C. Searle