

8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents

I hope you all had a lovely Christmas and would like to start by wishing you a Happy New Year, and what a start its been already!

We saw some of you Monday before the Lockdown restrictions came into force, since then there has been lots of behind the scenes preparations taking place to enable Pre-school to be open for some and provide virtual support for those remaining at home.

I want to say how incredible you are all, at yet another challenging time. We appreciate how difficult it is trying to juggle working either as keyworkers, or working from home, childcare and home schooling.

In a confusing message from Government, nurseries (those in the private sector) are required to remain open fully. Pre-schools, those attached to a school, are permitted to use their discretion on who they admit. It seems sensible and fair therefore that we apply the same principles to pre-school as we are to school. Places will be offered to:

- Children of key workers
- Children with Special Educational Needs
- Children who are vulnerable in other ways – we as a setting know each of our families and children well and know who would fall into this category.

We are also very mindful that we don't want to put staff at risk any more than we have to and that there is a 'critical mass' of children that need to be in the setting so they have other peers to play with – it wouldn't be very fun being just 1 or 2 in the setting!!

**Even if you have requested a place, we don't think your child fits into any of the above criteria and therefore we're NOT expecting to see your child in the setting.**

I appreciate that this may not be the news you expected to hear and I know many of you are juggling care of little ones along with work from home but I do hope you can understand the gravity of the lockdown and the need to protect staff and other children by limiting the numbers in a fair way.

My email directly is [e.jefferies@stockbridge.hants.sch.uk](mailto:e.jefferies@stockbridge.hants.sch.uk) if you need to get in touch with me, please do. If you need to speak to someone, call the school office who will be able to arrange this. Mrs Evans is poorly at the moment and also shielding as someone in her household is critically vulnerable. I know that she is very keen for you all to have her email so that you can contact her but I want her to be well first!! As soon as she is able, I know she'll be in touch.

## WHAT WILL HOME PROVISION LOOK LIKE?

We will be uploading activities and things to do as well as stories on Tapestry every Monday.

There will be a story video or singing activity uploaded daily so that you can either watch this short clip with your child or use this as part of their home schooling while you support siblings (or have a break!).

There is no pressure to complete all of these, however there is the expectation to stay in contact as part of schools safeguarding policies.

By clicking that you have "like" the entry I can at least can tell you have seen it. It would be great if you could upload something to show us any lovely things you may be doing. This can be as simple as playing with the trainset, reading stories or going for a walk as part of your daily exercise, to blow the cobwebs away! We love to see what your child has been up to and will make the transition back into school easier when the time comes, keeping links between home and school going.

We will also make contact with each of you, each week to just touch base, find out if there's anything you need help with. Last lockdown, parents asked us to post a little video if their child was missing their key worker, or could we give a rainbow award for super helping at home – anything that keeps us in touch with you is really, really important for your child.

I will write separately about funding once we have greater clarity from Government but we will still make a headcount claim for the Government funded hours you signed the headcount form for as we have staffed to accommodate these. This is not money that comes from you though but I wanted you to know that this is the approach we are taking – if we are subsequently told to do otherwise, I'll let you know!

The key to getting through this difficult time is to form your own routine however that may look for your family. We know the gargantuan efforts you will be putting in to balance home life and having a little one around won't necessarily be helpful! If you need to vent, cry, celebrate or commiserate, we are here for you.

Kind regards,



Emma Jefferies  
Headteacher

