19th March 2020

Dear parents, carers and families,

**IMPORTANT LETTER – PLEASE READ!**

Firstly, thank you for your incredible support at this extraordinary time, both to us and to those in our community. It has been an odd week carrying on ‘as usual’ whilst planning for the very unusual. EP staff have been amazing with all but three able to be in this week. All those on the ground have been upbeat, warm and doing everything they can to keep spirits high and children relaxed and focussed. I am incredibly grateful.

**As you know, we are now closing at the end of this week and so staff are now working hard to set up a range of on-line learning support. For now we are planning for the two weeks until Easter but this will of course change according to government updates.**

The home page of our website will be the first port of call if you forget how to find anything! From here there are hyperlinks to each class’ blog page where there are links to sites we recommend, and a reminder about how to get onto the virtual classrooms. We will use our app for sharing updates.

**We have also set up a ‘google classroom’ for each class where there will be interactions with the teacher, changing daily at 9am.** We hope this will support you in setting up a routine with an expectation of some work each day and also recommend good quality websites, feed you ideas for fun, practical activities and – in time – outdoor learning we hope!

Children were shown how to log in today. Attached to this letter is the log in to make this happen should it not work and it’s on that home learning web page too! You have a different code for each of the ‘classrooms’ that you may access – there are rooms for Miss Frood Maths for Years 5 and 6, support rooms from Annie and Angela and a PE room with Martin and Deanna. Check that out for live workouts!!! We’d ask that you try it out tonight and contact us tomorrow if there are any problems. This ‘virtual school’ is new for us so bear with us in the early days if there are teething problems!

We also want to retain what is special about EP and that is our high level of personalisation. To this end, **every child will have a named staff contact who will call your child a few times each week. This will retain a sense of connection with us and our community and enable us to help you with any issues and share your good ideas too!** Each child has someone; not just each family. We will make initial contact on the number you give as the preferred text contact. It will be for you to plan with your key contact what time of day will be best for this call and to settle into a rhythm.

A core group of EP staff (almost all, on rotation) will be in school, supporting key workers’ children and our most vulnerable pupils. It seems inconceivable not to have a presence at the heart of our wonderful community. We can answer calls and will all be on email as usual. Please continue to see us all as part of your support network.

One last thing: one of the dangers of this period of isolation will be too much screen time! Please be mindful about this, balancing board games and active learning with screens! Also on our website are reminders about e-safety etc.

This is an incredibly difficult time for us all. Tomorrow we will celebrate each other and spend much of the day teaching children dice and card games. Free packs of cards and dice will be coming home! Games instructions will be on our website!

With love and best wishes from us all to all of you,

Kate and all at EP.