

Dear Parents and Carers

We hope you have been and been able to enjoy the sunshine and have had some rest and relaxation during this very unusual time. Thank you for all the positive comments that staff have received. Your support at this time is vital and really appreciated. As I am sure you all are too, we are looking forward to returning to normal as soon as possible. As we are at the start of a new term, we wanted to get in touch with some updates and information.

Update for Term 5

The Mendip School remains closed to the majority of our pupils. The government guidance is clear that where pupils can remain safely at home they should be at home. This includes pupils with EHCPs. We are keen to support you wherever we can. We know this must be difficult for families so if there is anything we can do to help, please let us know.

We receive many government updates in school. Recently there has been additional guidance around access to exercise more than once a day if needed to be able to meet your child's needs. This states that you can leave your home for a medical need. If you (or a person in your care) has a specific health condition that requires you to leave the home to maintain your health, including if that involves travel beyond your local area, then you can do so. This, for example, could include where individuals with learning disabilities or autism require specific exercise in an open space two or three times each day, ideally in line with a care plan agreed with a medical professional. If you intend to do this then please take a copy of your child's EHCP with you as evidence.

The Government are continuing to advise that if anyone within your household shows symptoms that you self-isolate for 14 days. In school, what Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) we have will only be used for personal care and we would appreciate your support in reducing risks to our pupils, staff and their families by keeping pupils at home if you have any concerns around their health. More information is available through this link.

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

It is also important for you to be aware that while we will do our best to adhere to the guidelines for social distancing, this will be extremely difficult in our setting and for our pupils. This is a difficult time and we know that families and our school community are working together to do the best we can to support each other.

Home Learning

We will continue to provide home learning for you and your children. A survey will be sent out to you this week so we can gather your opinion on what has or hasn't been useful and what you would like more or less of. What we want to make clear is that each family is different and will have different challenges to deal with. There is no expectation for you to complete all home learning but to do what is right for you, your family and your children.

Government support with learning at home

From Monday 20th April, the government is providing resources to support families at home. Available support includes:

- [a list of online educational resources](#) which have been identified by some of the country's leading educational experts to help pupils to learn at home
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources>
- the BBC enhancing its education provision to include daily lessons, starting from 20th April, 2020
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

www.themendipschool.co.uk

For parents with children under 5 years old, who have not yet started school, the Department for Education (DfE)'s [Hungry Little Minds campaign](#) features tips and practical activities that you can do at home with children to support their early learning. Many of these resources would be appropriate to children over 5 years old.

- <https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk/>

There are simple ways to help your children learn and it does not have to feel like 'learning'. Having everyday conversations, make-believe play, and reading together, all make a big difference to your child's development and well-being.

You can find more ideas and content from the BBC's [Tiny Happy People campaign](#) and the [National Literacy Trust Family Zone](#).

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>
- <https://literacytrust.org.uk/family-zone>

The above information is taken from this link:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

The Mendip School office is open from 9am until 3pm each day so please get in touch if you need anything or make contact with your child's teacher. Our staff are on a two-week rota to ensure they remain as healthy as possible for themselves, families and our school community. This could cause a slight delay in responding to your questions. We will continue to share relevant information with you as and when we receive it.

Once again thank you for your support. Please stay safe. We are all really looking forward to seeing you soon.

With very best wishes,

Emily Massey

Executive Head