



ROBERT MELLORS PRIMARY ACADEMY

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Friday 6th November

Dear Parents/Carers,

At the start of the second lockdown, I am so glad to be sending this letter knowing that school can continue to operate as 'normal' over the coming weeks. Many thanks for your ongoing support over the first half term of the year. We have had to alter many of our normal systems in school and we are very grateful for your flexibility, understanding and respect for these as we have put them in place.

Together, we have faced and overcome Covid-related challenges in the first half term and we are prepared to tackle any further obstacles that we meet.

Isolation and remote learning

Having had our first confirmed positive cases in school has meant that we have had to implement our remote learning plan so that the children are able to continue to learn while they have been isolating. This has been a big success thanks to your efforts in supporting your children to access the daily learning that has been provided by the teachers. We are pleased with the way that Seesaw has enabled isolating children and their teachers to interact – the teachers have been really pleased to offer support and praise using Seesaw. We are aware that there are some of you who may have experienced difficulties with this app, please contact your child's class teacher via the school office who will be able to offer solutions to this.

Harvest/Foodbank

As it is the Harvest time of year again we are currently taking in donations for the Arnold Food Bank. This will work just as it did last year. If you would like to donate the Food Bank are currently in need of the following items; **Tinned Puddings (Custard and Rice Pudding), Tinned Fruits, Chocolate, Tinned Meat, Tinned Veg, Squash, Jam, and every day toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap bars, shampoo, deodorant, shower gel, toilet paper.** These can be sent in with your child.

Many thanks in advance for your support. Now, more than ever, the food bank is a very worthy cause and the donations will help families in our local area deal with the current situation a little more easily.

We are also aware that we may have families finding themselves in real hardship over the next 4 weeks as jobs and income become uncertain or delayed. Arnold Foodbank will be providing us with some food parcels shortly that will provide enough food for a family of 4 for 3 days. We are also able to make referrals direct to the Food Bank, if you are struggling please give the office a call.

Extra Clothing

As part of our efforts to reduce the transmission of Covid, we are keeping all classrooms well ventilated in line with government guidelines. This obviously means that school is a little cooler than usual as the temperatures outside drop! All children must continue to come to school in their full school uniform however, they may also bring an extra layer to wear during the day if they are cold. A plain hoodie or sweatshirt would be ideal. Dark tights or leggings under skirts or trousers can also be worn. We would like to avoid the children wearing their coats inside as this would mean that they don't feel warm enough when they go out at playtimes. It is important to us that the children are as comfortable as possible in their classrooms and that they are able to focus on their learning so keeping them warm with extra layers will really help.

Birthday Parties

During this time, we are very aware that children are unable to have birthday parties and celebrate with their friends. This is a real shame for them.

We have decided then to take 30 minutes of the last Friday of each month to have a small party to celebrate the birthdays of any children who have had a birthday in that month (children who have had a birthday in Sept/Oct will be part of the first birthday).

Time for a dance and a treat should help to ease the disappointment of not having a party at home. We hope this will add a little more positivity during this tricky time.

Christmas performances

As you know we would usually be busy planning our Christmas performances and dusting off our Wise men and Shepherds costumes. We haven't forgotten this and we certainly could not let Christmas pass without celebrating with our families and friends in the area. We are therefore currently working hard to come up with a plan so that the children can be involved in celebrating Christmas in a new and virtual way. Keep your eyes open for an update on how we will do this.

Happy news!

We are happy to share with you the news that Mrs Heathcote is expecting a baby that is due in the spring. We are all very excited for her and wish her huge congratulations.

We would also like to give our best wishes to Miss Wheeldon who will be leaving us for her maternity leave at the end of next week. We will all be waiting to hear the happy news when her baby is born. Mr Burton who will be covering Miss Wheeldon's leave, is joining us next week so that he can get to know his new class before he becomes their teacher.

We are very much aware that with increased infection rates and the new lockdown restrictions, many of you and your children may be experiencing increased levels of stress and worry. Please don't be afraid to talk to us – whilst we might not be able to always offer a solution, we do believe in the old saying that 'a problem shared is a problem solved'. We care very much about every child in our school and this care extends to you as well.

Best wishes

Mrs Essex and team

