

ABBOT'S LEA SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mrs Ania Hildrey, M.Ed, B.Ed(Hons), NPQH



23 April 2020

Dear Families

Ref: Learning and interaction opportunities during Term 5

I am delighted to be writing to you with an offer of additional support available to your child during the national lockdown.

As we have no clear indication from the government as to when schools might re-open, we want to be able to continue to support your child with learning from home by offering more resources and adding opportunities to interact with the Class Teams.

I want to echo Mrs Hildrey's previous message that any of the opportunities are there to help and support if the students and family find them so, but are not mandatory. It is therefore your and your child's decision as to whether to engage with this additional support.

Over the Easter holidays, my team and I have been busy developing three aspects of such support for our students:

1. Weekly calls home

We will continue with the weekly calls home and those will be taking place at the start of the week.

Class Teams are, understandably, needing to make these calls at flexible times, as they too juggle their professional duties with the personal commitments. By the very nature, those calls are relatively brief and meant as a quick catch up ones. If, however, the team calls at a time that is not convenient, please agree to re-arrange for the time mutually suitable.

These calls are aimed at Class Team-Family communication, but it may be that, on occasions, it is appropriate and helpful for the staff member to speak to the student directly.

2. Home-based learning platform

Many of our students able and willing to engage with the learning packs sent home at the time of school closure, are likely to have now completed all of their work.

We have developed our website in a way which we hope you will find helpful. When the website goes live on 24 April 2020 you will find a link called "COVID 19 – home support" on the home screen. Under this link, you may click on your child's Key Stage and read about which areas of the curriculum they would normally be covering. There is then a range of regularly updated resources grouped under all of these areas of the curriculum. We encourage your child to complete some of the work from as many areas of the curriculum as possible, should they be in a position to do so.

Photos, videos, stories – we love all the evidence of learning!

Please continue to send pictures of your child's learning activities – whatever they may be – to the Class Team. We love seeing your child learn and such collection of photos will help make up a social story of the strange period of time when we see each other again!

Any evidence which you are happy to be shared on our online platforms, such as website, Facebook, Twitter and other social media, can be emailed directly to Mrs Hildrey: headteacher@abbotsleaschool.co.uk I know you will agree that seeing all the wonderful photos is really morale-boosting! It also helps with the feeling of belonging at this time of social distancing.

3. Online interactive “Zoom” sessions

As of next Monday, 27 April 2020, Class Teams will be offering online live and interactive sessions for your child and their class peers. This will also apply to the Supported Interns.

The sessions will take place via “Zoom” - an online platform where your child can watch a member of their Class Team; this will be either their Class Teacher, their HLTA or their TA and there could be two staff present at times.

The sessions will be interactive and your child will be asked questions and will be encouraged to contribute answers. Of course, your child may wish to view the session and think about the ideas, but not participate, and this too is fine. There will be an introduction with the “Rules”, which will include empowering students to “pass” or even “leave the session” whilst it takes place, should they wish to.

The sessions will be thought-provoking and will follow our Term 5 theme which is “Our Heroes” – a subject you might argue could not be more applicable at the present time.

As always, the content will be differentiated for your child's age range and ability.

These 30-minute live Zoom sessions will be available for your child every week starting with three sessions next week. We may review whether this should decrease or could increase, depending on how the sessions are received by our students. This provision will be in place during term time but will exclude Bank Holiday – 8 May 2020. The timetable of your child's sessions will be emailed to you each Friday for the following week. This email will also include instructions about how to access the sessions with a very straight-forward step-by-step guide.

If your child would like to participate in the sessions, but is unable to, due to technical reasons, please let your child's Class Team know by emailing them, or discussing it with them in your weekly phone call.

Our priority at this time is ensuring that your child continues to feel cared for by their Class Team and that they still feel a sense of belonging to our community here at Abbot's Lea

School. Therefore, if you are in a position to help your child engage with these sessions, we would whole-heartedly encourage their participation.

Safeguarding

Naturally, when using interactive live online technology, a lot of care and attention needs to be given to the safeguarding of students, as well as the staff. Therefore, the email you receive on Friday will also include some simple rules which must be adhered to at all times.

We ask for your full cooperation with the expectations set out below:

By allowing your child to join the session you accept that:

- The host of the session will record it for standard monitoring purposes.
- This recording will not be copied, distributed or shared by the host.
- The students, or anyone in their household, present at the time of the session will not be permitted to record the session in any way.
- Responsibility for your child and household members adhering to this expectation, and you will supervise your child appropriately during the session.
- Despite the above guidance, the conduct of the participants is beyond the host's immediate control and as such neither the host nor the school can police others' adherence to the rules above.
- Neither the host nor the school is responsible for the online security of the Internet or the Zoom platform and will not be liable for any breaches arising from the session.
- You must report any concerns to the host as soon as you become aware of them.
- The school will follow its safeguarding policies and procedures in addressing any such concerns or breaches.

By allowing your child to join the session you agree to all of the above. If you do not agree, please do not allow your child to join the Zoom session.

Lastly, I would like to add a sincere thank you for how welcome everybody at Abbot's Lea has made me feel since starting with you on 30 March 2020. Despite the strangest of circumstances to start my Deputy Headship, I have been delighted to lead a team of professionals – middle leaders, teachers and support staff – all of whom are embracing a new way of working and trying their very best to deliver this provision to our students. We are all unanimous in our belief that maintaining positive relationship and social interaction is in the best interest of our students during the time of school closure.

In the meantime, I wish you a good day – stay safe and keep well.

Yours faithfully



Mrs E Tobin
Deputy Headteacher
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