Aycliffe Village Primary School

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you and your families are all keeping well and that you managed to enjoy the Easter weekend, even if it was a little different to usual. I hope the sunny weather has been helping to lift your spirits.

A reminder that staff will be adding weekly learning activities to Google Classroom pages (or Tapestry for Reception children). We hope these are helpful to you. Whilst we encourage you to use these, please don't feel it is compulsory to complete them all. We know everyone's current circumstances at home are very different and this might affect the amount of support you can give to your child. As always, we feel the priority should be your child's happiness and well being. Please contact your child's teacher, via email, if you have any questions or concerns. The government, in conjunction with the BBC, and some other companies, have also released some really useful resources to support home learning. There are some fantastic resources available and teachers will be signposting you to them over the next few weeks.

Take care
Mrs H Sutherland

Update about Vouchers for Free School Meals

I thought it would be helpful to confirm that the vouchers are *only for families who are eligible due to income*. This does not include children who might usually receive free school meals as part of Key Stage 1 universal free school meals. We appreciate that the financial circumstances of some of our families might have changed, due to the current situation. If you now feel you might be eligible for free school meals, due to recent changes with your income, please look at information on the following link. https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals If you feel you now meet this criteria, please contact Mrs Swainston at school on aycliffevillage@durhamlearning.net) and we can arrange an eligibility check.

For those families who are currently eligible for the vouchers, they should be on their way to you now (via email). We have done all we can to get these too you as soon as possible however the system we had to use was inundated and we are aware there have been delays with these. Unfortunately this was out of our control. Please contact us at school this week if you still haven't received yours.

Online Safety

Due to the current situation, we are aware many children will be spending more time online and also chatting to friends on social media. Please remember to monitor this to ensure your children are safe and are acting appropriately whilst using these forums. Whilst technology is playing such a positive part during this situation, it can also put place young children in vulnerable situations and can be concerning for their well being. I have uploaded some information from *Thinkuknow* (the national online safety education programme) to the Newsletter section on our school website. Staff will also be adding information about this to Google Classroom pages/Tapestry.

After School Clubs

We are aware that some families have paid in advance for after school clubs that then haven't taken place. We are in the process of checking with people who provide the clubs to our school to see what their policies are on reimbursements, etc. Obviously this is an incredibly difficult time, financially, for many people and many small businesses so we are trying to be sensitive to this, whilst acknowledging that parents have paid for things that haven't taken place. We will provide an update in future newsletters once we have a way forward with this.

Update about Ford Castle Residential Trip

Obviously, due to the continued lockdown, the planned trip to Ford Castle will not be able to go ahead at the end of April. This is very disappointing for all involved, especially our children. We are exploring the possibility of this being rearranged to October 2020 and will share more information in future newsletters. We hope this takes away some of the disappointment your children will be feeling about this and will give them something to look forward to.