



# Heltwate School

## A note from the Head

24<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

I hope you have been able to enjoy the sunshine and all our families are keeping safe and well.

It is very different this year! Thank you to everyone in our school community for continuing to follow the Government guidance: stay at home, protect our NHS and save lives. We are all starting to get used to a different way of living and working, but it feels strange being unable to continue routines and visit family and friends.



All my staff and myself really miss all of our brilliant children! At the moment, staff are either working from home using Class Dojo, or coming into school on a rota as we remain open for children of critical key workers and other vulnerable children.

Many thanks to all parents and carers who have been supporting students with the daily home learning tasks posted on Class Dojo. Hopefully you have had lots of fun along the way! From Bake Offs to Dance Offs, Literacy to Art and Numeracy to Computing, every single activity you support your child with is another learning

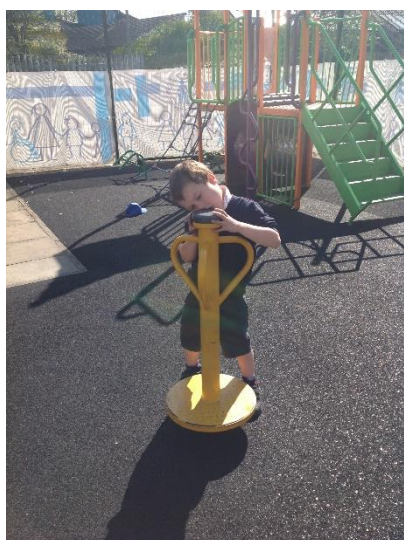
opportunity. I've been so impressed with the wide range and variety of work that's been taking place; it's been really encouraging to see how well students are adapting to their new home schooling routines. A huge thank you for taking part, (even when getting involved means looking a bit silly!) and for your enthusiasm and positivity! I can't tell you how much I enjoyed my dance routine ... We are seeing some beautiful work being shared and this way of learning will continue this term.



Free school meal vouchers and who is entitled to them? has been a challenge. We have been on top of it all along but the rules have kept changing and the supplier's website keeps crashing, I notice it is down again today. I think we are expecting the eligibility criteria to change again. Any problems let your class teacher know.

There has been a great deal of press coverage this weekend about schools reopening in three weeks, please do not take any notice of these stories. Schools will only open when it is safe to do so, it will then be a phased return. There are many more things that will need to happen which are outside our control before we can reopen.

The Oak National Academy is due to launch today. This brand-new enterprise has been created by 40 teachers from some of the leading schools across England, backed by government grant funding. It will provide 180 video lessons each week, across a broad range of subjects from maths to art to languages, for every year group from Reception through to Year 10. The BBC is launching its own education package across TV and online, featuring celebrities and teachers – helping to keep children learning and supporting parents. I am assured there are some activities suitable for our children.



Education Secretary Gavin Williamson has announced that disadvantaged children across England are set to receive laptops and tablets as part of a push to make remote education accessible for pupils staying at home during the coronavirus outbreak. The government will also provide 4G routers to make sure disadvantaged secondary school pupils and care leavers can access the internet – where those families do not already have mobile or broadband internet in the household. This action is pricey and a huge logistical process. It does make me think the government isn't planning for us all to be back anytime soon but as soon as I see any further information about this I will let you know.

Stay safe and again thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Adam Brewster  
Headteacher

