

# Benhurst Primary School

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Head teacher: Mrs K. Hart BSc (Hons)

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we enter the fourth week of our current period of school closures, I wanted to firstly acknowledge the wonderful job you are all doing of supporting your children with remote learning whilst trying to juggle your own family and work commitments. It is fantastic to see the huge number of children across the school attending live lessons enabling them to engage with their peers and their year group staff on a regular basis.

As a community, we really appreciate the many positive emails and tweets we have received; thank you for your continued support thorough this difficult time. Whilst we are closed to the majority of our pupils, we are still here to support our families from a distance in any way we can.

### Additional Live Activities

We are very excited to announce additional weekly live sessions starting this week. Tarkan, one of our sports coaches who usually provides before and after school clubs, will be leading a live P.E lesson for every year group each week via Google Meet. These sessions will be 'Joe Wicks' style and the only equipment required will be a ball.

In addition, myself and other members of the Senior Leadership Team will be leading weekly year group assemblies. We will discuss a key theme each week and are very much looking forward to seeing all of the children.

The times of the weekly PE lessons and assemblies will be the same each week and will be posted in each Google classroom along with the links needed for joining. Both activities are optional.

### LIFE Competitions

You may have seen on our Twitter page that the Life Education Trust are running 2 weekly competitions during the school closures open to all pupils from the Trust schools; a photography competition and a book review competition. Each week a winner will be chosen from each competition and will receive a £10 Amazon voucher. We have already had one lucky winner from our school. For more information or to enter, please follow this link: <https://lifeeducationtrust.com/competition/>



## National Tests

The Department for Education have confirmed that all national statutory tests including the Year\_1 Phonics Check and the Key Stage 1 and 2 SATs have been cancelled for this academic year. Therefore, children in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6 will not be completing national tests at the end of this academic year. Statutory national tests do not currently take place in any other year groups.

## Staff COVID Testing

The Department for Education, in conjunction with the NHS, are introducing asymptomatic testing in Primary schools for **STAFF ONLY** from Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January. The purpose of this testing strategy is to break the chain of transmission of Covid 19 and our school is pleased to be supporting this programme in the effort to eradicate the virus.

Staff will be testing at home so there will be no change to the school day both during the school closures or when we fully re - open to all pupils. It is possible that the introduction of regular staff testing will result in bubbles needing to close. Should this be the case, this will be communicated in the usual way.

## Pupil Well - Being

The ongoing pandemic and resulting school closures are challenging for everyone no matter their age however, it can be particularly difficult for children who are trying to make sense of the situation and adapt to constant changes. As a school community we are happy to support families by offering support and advice. In addition, we recommend the following guidance for supporting pupil mental health and well - being.

1. Guidance on supporting young people during the pandemic

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

2. Guidance on mental health during the pandemic

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

There are also a number of other useful website links which can be found under the Parents - Covid Guidance section of the school website.



Finally, I want to say a huge well done to each and every pupil at Benhurst whether they are currently attending school or completing their remote learning at home. They have had to very quickly adapt to a new way of school life and they are continuing to demonstrate our Core Values under very different and difficult circumstances. I am very proud of them all.

#### Shout out to the KIDS.

Everyone is applauding everyone but our children. These little heroes have stayed indoors more than they've ever known in their lives. Their whole worlds have literally been turned upside down. All these rules they've never known. A life they couldn't have imagined. All the things they love like sports, being with friends, going to school, or just being kids have all been taken away from them. Adults talking about others becoming unwell, news reporting death after death. Our poor children's minds must be racing. Every day they get up and carry on despite all that's going on. So here's to our little heroes: today, tomorrow, forever.

Take care and stay safe

*K. Hart*

Mrs K Hart  
Head teacher