

NEWSLETTER Tuesday 26th May 2020

I write this week's newsletter after enjoying an early morning walk through Dover with my husband, down to the seafront and along the pier. The world looked calm and quiet, with the sun shining on the sea, few people around, as if everything was as it should be; it's hard to realise we are beginning week 10 of Lockdown and this is the new normal.

Last week was a very busy one, with constant communication from the Local Authority and the Department for Education trying to justify schools partially opening from next Monday, June 1st. I feel I sent numerous letters to you all, last week, in readiness for this. I also spoke to many parents during the week and I really appreciated connecting with you all, it was a good feeling. The situation for our schools now is that Eythorne and Elvington will re-open, (after being closed to any children since March 24th) and both schools have invited EYFS and Year 1 children to come back to school on a full time basis from Monday 1st June.

Unfortunately, at this point in time, we cannot safely accommodate **Year 6 children**, many of whom are very keen to come back into school. However, we are very hopeful that after a few weeks we will have a better idea of how full the schools will be and we will then be able to invite Year 6 to join us. This is very important for them, as they will be moving on to their Secondary schools shortly and need to finish their primary school days in a way that gives them good memories of their time with us.

I have spoken to most **Year 5 parents** from both schools concerning the Kent Test registration period which is June to July. I have received confirmation from the Local Authority that registration for the Kent test will open on Monday 1st June and close on 1st July, so if you have decided to put your child in for the Kent Test please register them with the Local Authority during their time frame. The Local Authority suggests you go on 'kelsi' their web pages for information as to how to register your child.

It has been confirmed that **EYFS and Year 1** pupils who are coming back to school on June 1st will be provided with a packed lunch by Principals, our school caterers as their Universal school meal entitlement. We ask that if you wish your child to take advantage of this that you please email the school office as soon as possible and by Tuesday 26th May at the latest. Thank you.

Please remember, this week is being treated as a holiday so there will be no Home Learning on the website, we want you to have fun if you possibly can. Key Workers' children and Vulnerable children who come into school this week will have a slight change from doing

Home Learning too. I hope you all read the email I sent clarifying that June 1st – June 5th week can also be regarded by parents as a holiday week if you wish and if you'd booked time off work, so your child will not be expected to do Home Learning in that instance. There will, however be learning activities uploaded on the home Learning page for those parents that wish to use it. Year 2, 3 4 and 5 will be able to access Home Learning as usual from 1st June. For EYFS and Year 1 parents, who will not be sending their child back to school on June 1st, home learning activities and useful websites will be on your child's home learning page for you to continue the learning at home.

As we come to the end of a gruelling Term 5 and before we embark on Phase 4 or Term 6, I must pay tribute to all of our staff at both schools who have been amazing in their dedication; to keep the school open, set meaningful learning for the children and trying to keep the lines of communication going between children, parents and teachers. Thank you so much to all of the Teachers and TAs from both schools, in addition, I must mention Mrs Thornton and Ms Uyl still keeping the office at Eythorne Elvington school running and Mr Quartley. our caretaker there, making sure with Mrs Hall that the school is spotlessly clean, ready for reopening. Equally, at Sibertswold, Mrs Romney and Mrs Errington have kept the offices working so well, every day, since we went into Lockdown and to Mr Reed our caretaker and the cleaners who are working so hard to ensure we can maintain high standards of cleanliness and that the school is as clean and safe as it possibly can be for us all.

Mrs Bird

This week's poem was written by a 10 year old boy sharing his Lockdown experiences.

Lockdown

The eerie quiet is deafening. No school bells ringing, no children chat-chattering,

No cars rumbling along the roads, huff-huffing and beep-beeping,

No trains, clickety-clacking on the rickety rail track.

No planes drawing pictures in the sky on the way to far-off lands.

Who could know something so microscopically small could be so huge?

By bringing so much fear, disruption

And death?

Once such a distant clap of thunder,
Now a raging storm that has locked us in our homes
And hurt our loved ones.
But, miraculously, there is a newfound harmony in the silence.
Listen to the birds tweeting a hopeful tune,
Hear the bees buzzing about their business,
Relish the rustling leaves on the majestic trees.
Lie down! Watch the clouds slowly animating the heavens.
We may be locked in our homes
But we have unlocked our hearts
To others: NHS staff, postal workers, supermarket stackers,
A war hero - walking, singing, inspiring,
Helping to fight this invisible enemy. Thank you!
There will be the brightest of rainbows at the end of the darkest storm.
I hope you have a happy half term week where you can find some joyful moments and where everyone stays healthy and safe. I invite you to share the following prayer with your children.

A Prayer for Inner Strength

Dear Father God,

Please give me the strength to endure this situation, and to find the blessings and lessons that it contains.

Please give me the endurance to continue ahead.

Please guide my thoughts, words and actions, so that I walk your path of peace and love.

Amen.