

Henham and Ugley Primary and Nursery School

School Lane • Henham • Bishop's Stortford
Hertfordshire CM22 6BP
Tel: 01279 850213 • Fax 01279 850429

Headteacher: Mrs Kim Hall



13th June 2020

Dear parents/ carers,

How things have changed and developed in the last couple of weeks!

We are now operating with limited year groups, namely, Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. It is with sadness that we are unable to welcome more children back to school, but with the current guidance of 2 metre distancing and 15 children in a bubble, we don't have the capacity to fit anymore year groups in, or in fact the staff to supervise, as they are unable to move across bubbles. The provision for the 4 year groups has meant a lot of logistical juggling, but we've managed it, albeit with a part time offer. Additionally, I am pleased we have still been able to maintain our key worker provision, for those parents whose job is vital to the Covid-19 effort, as well as for those children more vulnerable in our school community.

As the first of our children from years 1 and 6 came back this week, it was once again wonderful to hear laughter and giggles fill the school! It really is an emotional time; wonderful to hear the joy from the children that are back in school, once again reunited physically with their peers, but alongside this is much sadness for the many, many children, who are unable to return. Hopefully in September this will change— we will have to wait a bit longer before we know for sure if this is the case.

Staff are still providing online learning for all year groups, regular phone and email contact with parents, hard copies of activities for those that need it, and of course we also have our school information Facebook page, where many of you share your experiences of being away from school.

It's not the same, I know, but with schools having to adhere to strict guidelines, like everyone else, we are doing our utmost to ensure parents and children feel supported.

I know many of you have either spoken to me or your child's class teacher about zoom meetings or zoom lessons. Staff have worked ceaselessly and tirelessly to support pupils and parents since the school closures were thrust upon us in March. Responding to endless guidance and updates from the government, reinventing our school to provide online learning offers and providing care for those families most vulnerable. All this on top of having their own families and for many, their own children to home school.

Teacher Union guidance is also quite clear with regard to online lessons not being provided due to the additional workload as well as potential safeguarding implications.



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Part of the guidance for leaders requesting their staff to provide online lessons states: 'Online lessons are not desirable as a tool for primary children, as the teacher-pupil interaction is not easily replicated in this way. The bulk of tasks should be flexible lists of activities that can be chosen by pupils and families to do at convenient times. A list of flexible tasks that cover different areas of the curriculum allows children to choose the tasks that interest them, and the ones parents feel they can manage.'

I have followed the guidance from unions for teachers, to provide a range of online learning activities, which I post onto the school website (by the Monday lunchtime of each new week).

Alongside this, on the website, there is a vast range of additional links where external teacher led activities are available, for example 'Oak Academy' if this a preference.

As a school, we will not be providing either zoom lessons or timetabled zoom calls. I know that some teachers, have attended zoom 'virtual social get togethers' this is optional for each teacher and is not something I insist on them doing. As I say, many staff have their own children, which makes it very difficult for them to partake in zoom calls.

We want all children to be able to attend school. Sadly, we have no choice in the government directive, but are doing our utmost to stay connected and provide materials for your child to access.

If you do require additional support, please do get in touch with me, I will do everything I can to help.
head@henhamugley.essex.sch.uk

We continue to miss you all, and really hope we continue making progress in reducing the rate of infection in order for all children to get back into school as soon as possible.

Continue to keep safe everyone x

Kim

Kim Hall

Headteacher

