



# Stoke Mandeville Combined School

*Caring, Inspiring and Achieving Together*

*Weekly Update Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021*

## **Happy New Year**

As we write this welcome it seems a long time since the New Year started. In these extraordinary times we hope you were able to take some safe moments of enjoyment from the festive period. While we remain in uncertain times we are optimistic for positive changes as we move forward with 2021.

## **New Learning Arrangements**

We must thank everyone for their patience and understanding during what has been an anxious and frustrating start to the term. The announcement made by the Prime Minister on Monday evening regarding how Primary Schools operate, created a significant challenge in organising the logistics for this half term. It is testament to the dedication and commitment of the teachers, class teams and support staff that, less than 48 hours after the changes were announced, we have begun to implement live streamed lessons to a majority of children having to access learning from home. We have in school, as outlined in Government guidance, children who meet the criteria of being a Key worker or classified as vulnerable. The Government has in this lockdown outlined suggestions of how much learning children should be doing on a daily basis, and while not all of this will be live teaching, for those at home, there will still be work set which needs to be completed to meet the recommendations. As we shared earlier this week we are required to have registers of children accessing learning from home.

It is not to be underestimated the immense efforts of you all in supporting us, with these plans and thank you to everyone who has provided feedback about the first experiences of the new online learning. We are delighted to see that a majority of our children have been able to engage with these lessons and are working hard to find solutions to make sure that all of the children are able to access the technology required to participate. The DfE, have currently, only allocated Stoke Mandeville with 1 additional laptop for use during lockdown. We recognise there may be some families who would benefit from further support with technology and if you feel we can help please contact us. As you will appreciate this may not be possible in all cases.

For those children who have returned to school this week, we are incredibly proud of them showing their responsibility and resilience under difficult circumstances.

As a parent body it may have seemed an unusual request for home learners, but by asking children to wear their school cardigan or jumper we felt it provided each child the opportunity to be in the correct mindset for learning. It helps them to feel part of the class, even from home, and allows them to enact one of the simplest but more important routines of their day – getting ready for school and learning. We also believe that the sense of belonging is a positive step for children's mental health during a time where it would be easy to feel isolated.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

## **COVID Cases**

We would ask that, irrespective of whether your child is currently attending school or not, you continue to keep us updated of any positive COVID cases by emailing confidentially to [covid@stokemandeville.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:covid@stokemandeville.bucks.sch.uk) so that we can support families and maintain a record of the impact of COVID on our school community. Alongside this will be the understanding that children who may be unwell at home may not be able to access the same level of learning.

## **Class Zoom Sessions**

Please can we ask that your online username during Zoom meetings makes it clear which child is online so that we can accurately record attendance for all children.

## **Road Safety**

Buckinghamshire Council have confirmed that all crossing patrollers have been stood down during the lockdown – we would ask that you take extra care when crossing the roads while this valuable support is not available to us.

## **Reception Class Applications**

Children born between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2017 will be starting school in September 2021. Applications for the Reception Class are invited by Bucks County Council using the portal which open 2nd November 2020. The deadline for applications is 15th January 2021. For more information please see:

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/apply-for-a-school-place/>

## **Letters Sent Home**

## **Dates for the Diary**

Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> February	School closes for Half Term
Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February	School re-opens after Half Term

**As we have only had a short week of learning we hope to return to some class updates from next week.**

**House points will also return again next week**