



Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Spring Term : Edition 4

Dear Bentham Families

As we approach half term, (not quite there but nearly – one more week to go), I wanted to write to you with an up-date regarding what will happen at school after the half-term break.

At present, there are no plans for school to open up to any more children than it is currently open to. This is in line with Government guidelines. The current situation will remain for, at least, two weeks beyond half term. Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 has been mentioned by the Government as a *potential* date for the wider opening up of schools. However, I would like to stress that, at the time of writing, I have no further information about this. Personal speculation is that any wider opening will certainly not include all year groups from this date, and that there will be limitations on which children can attend school.

In the meantime, we must continue to stay home and stay safe. I will up-date you with any plans and information as soon as they are available. Home Learning will, therefore, continue for the foreseeable future and certainly up until the 8<sup>th</sup> March.

I am in the process of reviewing some aspects of home learning with school staff and also taking into account the thoughts and views of our children who have completed the recent online survey. If you, as parents, have any suggestions, please do get in touch using the e-mail address [parents@bentham.n-yorks.sch.uk](mailto:parents@bentham.n-yorks.sch.uk).

As mentioned above, I do not expect an increase in the number of children in school for the two weeks following half term, and anticipate current arrangements will continue.

As a school we are very proud of our children and the way in which they have, once again, embraced home learning. Some children have found this easier than others. I am also very proud and grateful to you, as parents/carers, for stepping into our shoes and doing the best that you could possibly do. Again, some families have found this easy and others haven't.

At school, we realise that every family is different. No-one is here to judge or criticise - but we are here to support and help.

Remember, please do get in touch if you would like a conversation over the phone at any point.

Moving on from Covid related content, Miss Richardson will soon be starting her maternity leave. This week, myself, Mrs Chapman and members of the school's Governing body have been busy interviewing potential candidates to cover teaching in Class 2 during Miss Richardson's absence. I am pleased to inform parents that following the interview process Mr Jacob Hogg has been appointed. Mr Hogg has recently qualified as a teacher and is both enthusiastic and committed to helping children learn – he is also a very keen sportsperson. We look forward to welcoming him to our school family in the coming weeks.

This week, we have also welcomed Mr Harry Edmondson back into school. Mr Edmondson is on placement from the University of Cumbria and will be supporting children's learning alongside Mrs Harvey.

Following on from last week's Friday News, we do still have a couple of laptops available for distribution to families who are struggling to access online learning. If you are struggling and have not yet been contacted by the school, please do get in touch as I would rather the laptops be used than sat in boxes.

Next Friday will be the last Friday of half term and we will be holding a whole school Praise Assembly on Zoom. A link will be sent to you via email. Please do join us as certificates will be handed out and news shared with children. It is also a lovely opportunity for our children and school community to come together.

Have a lovely weekend, stay safe at home.

Mrs C Pearson  
Headteacher

**Home Learning** As you have hopefully seen, last week we introduced 'Finishing Off Friday' as part of our home learning. We recognised that some children were not getting an opportunity to finish off all the learning that had been set by class teachers. We hope 'Finishing Off Friday' will allow children to spend that little bit more time on a project, or go back and improve a piece of learning.

**Parent's Meetings** As during the Autumn term, we will, once again, be carrying out this term's parent's meetings via telephone. Although we have not seen some children in school this term, we still feel that it is important to keep the communication between school and home. Therefore, your child's class teacher will be contacting you with a 10 minute telephone appointment slot for Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February. Your child's class teacher will be e-mailing you're allocated time during next week. On the day, your child's class teacher will call you twice and, if there is no answer on either occasion, they will need to move onto the next appointment. The conversation will mainly involve talking to you about the progress your child has been making with home learning, successes and problems and an opportunity for you, as parents, to ask questions. As in the past, in the case of parents who are separated, only one phone call will be made for each child. We hope that you find this phone call valuable and informative, despite the unusual situation. Please note that if your child is in Nursery, you will not be receiving a phone call unless they have physically been in school. Mrs Milner has not even met many of the children so she will only be contacting those Nursery children's parents who have been in school.

**Nursery** We are starting to plan ahead for April and September when we have new intakes of children into our Nursery. If you know of a local family who have not yet contacted us with their details, then please do encourage them to give us a ring or send an e-mail with their child's details. This means that, in due course, we can then ensure families receive the necessary information for their child.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION February Half Term (15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021)** The Department for Education (DfE) have recently confirmed that schools will be **CLOSED** to **ALL** children, including those identified as vulnerable and those children of critical workers over the February half-term holidays.

**Lunch Parcels/Vouchers** The DfE have also confirmed with schools that they do not have to provide lunch parcels or food vouchers to cover the cost of meals over the half-term holidays. However, for those families whose children are in receipt of Free School Meals at Bentham Community Primary School, they will receive £15.00 worth of vouchers, per child to help purchase food. Funding has been secured from NYCC's Covid Winter Grant Scheme.

**Contact Tracing over the February Half-Term** Whilst school might not be open it is still imperative that everyone plays their part in stopping the spread of this terrible virus. Therefore, if your child tests

positive for COVID 19, or develops any symptoms during the holidays, then you **MUST** still let school know as quickly as possible by using the [parents@bentham.n-yorks.sch.uk](mailto:parents@bentham.n-yorks.sch.uk) e-mail address. Many thanks to everyone to date who has helped support the fight against Covid.

**World Book Day** This year we will, once again, be celebrating World Book Day, albeit in an alternative format! Miss Richardson is currently busy planning activities that children can take part in from home on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 to help celebrate this special day. More information to follow.....

**Red Nose Day** This year, we are once again supporting Red Nose Day which is taking place on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021. We have ordered lots of red noses which Miss Downham will be co-ordinating the sale of! Rumour has it there will be ten different 'styles' of noses with one very rare 'Golden Tommy' just waiting to be found. Please support this worthy cause and arrange to purchase your Red Nose from school. More information to follow.....



Reminder, for more information about Covid and symptoms in children, please visit:  
<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school>  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children/>

**Class e-mail addresses:**

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