

Dear Families,

This is certainly not the first newsletter I expected to write to you this year and it is very hard to comprehend that Spring Term only started last week. As always, I feel incredibly proud of our school community and am in complete awe of the way children, staff and parents alike have pulled together to make the best of the situation we find ourselves in.

I would like to publically thank our staff here at Mill View for the speed at which they put our plans into action, their positive approach to solving any obstacles that we come across & the incredible skill and ongoing dedication they give to teaching and supporting children working both in school and at home. I would also like to thank all of our parents and carers, you are doing an incredible job of managing the enormous challenges that working and educating at home brings. Attendance to live sessions and the response to work set on Seesaw has been absolutely outstanding across all year groups and the children are taking care and pride in the work they submit.

This week, in addition to live teaching sessions we will also be sending details of a live PE lesson with House of Dance for each year group, this term the HOD team were going to be working in school with staff and children to deliver our dance curriculum and support staff training. Lessons will be live streamed via zoom to both children at home and in school so they can participate together, zoom details and times will be sent via Seesaw.

Mrs Rickus and Mrs Kemp have also been busily preparing bespoke forest school and art tutorials for children to follow at home, in most cases children will be able to complete these activities independently. We will keep thinking of ideas to engage children at home and to maintain the connection with their friends and teachers.

Mrs Morris

Before the Christmas break, Mrs Morris told us of her decision that the time had come for her to retire. Mrs Morris has been a huge part of our school community for many years, as a staff member for the past 13 years and a parent before that. Mrs Morris will be greatly missed by all on the team, she is so incredibly kind and caring and such a strong, supportive and calm role model for our children and staff alike. Mrs Morris will be taking on a bigger role of caring for grandchildren and supporting family members when she leaves us but we all hope she will still call in to see us on a regular basis in between trips away in her campervan!

School Contact

In addition to live daily sessions and Seesaw, we are also keen to connect with families in additional ways while we can't see you face to face. We will be making telephone contact, on a weekly basis, with all families whose children are currently learning at home to check in and see if there are additional ways we can support. Staff are also contactable via the normal routes of Seesaw and email, if messages are sent in the evening or over the weekend, please be aware that there may be a delay in response.

If your child is unable to attend their live session or there are sessions in a week that they cannot attend due to your work commitments, we ask that you let their class teacher know. If we do not hear from you we will contact you to make sure all is well.

Digital Access

Over the past week I have received supportive emails from parents and grandparents asking how they might help other families with technology and digital access, so that all children can easily access live sessions from home. At this time, all of our children have internet access and at least one device they are able to use to access learning at home. However, in some cases these are not the best devices on which to access learning or many members of the family are using the same device. We have allocated school laptops where necessary but our stock is now low. Despite media headlines, we are yet to receive additional DfE laptops and I have been informed that we will receive just one in the next allocation. If you would like to make a donation to support the purchase of additional devices that we can lend to children at home, we have set up a Parentpay item for those who have previously asked or would like to do so. If you work for an organisation that may be able to help or even have devices yourself at home that you would like to donate to school we would make sure they were used to support those most in need. Our PTA are thinking of fundraising ideas to support the purchase of further devices too.

Staying safe online

With children now spending so much more time online, it is more important than ever for us to keep talking to them about how they can stay safe and use the technology available to them in a positive and healthy way.

Please follow these links we have shared on previous newsletters so you are best informed about the apps and platforms your children are accessing;

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/>



Over these coming days and weeks we are here if you need us, please do not hesitate to make contact.

If you are looking for a challenge and something to focus on over these next few weeks, we'd love you to join the MVP team for the www.virtualwinterrun.co.uk/register/virtual-winter-run Lots of our staff members have signed up and you are very welcome too. You can walk or run and details to sign up can be found by following the link above.

Best wishes,

Mrs Doyle and the Mill View TEAM