

QI Noticeboard

May 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope that you and your families are keeping safe and well, and are continuing to adapt to the unprecedented situation in which we have all found ourselves. No-one could dispute that the recent weeks have been an emotional rollercoaster for all of us, with the huge restrictions placed on our way of life, and concern for ourselves and loved ones, creating a significant source of stress and anxiety. I do understand how difficult it is for so many of you staying at home, balancing the various demands currently placed on you in your own roles whilst supporting your children's learning. Many of our QI staff have children themselves, so I hear first-hand how challenging this is.

I also recognise the additional pressures on many families of being furloughed, losing jobs and not having physical contact with the wider family networks you would usually draw upon for support.

In spite of all these difficulties, we have all been touched by the kindness and appreciation shown to the school for what we are trying to do to support families at this terribly difficult time. Thank you to so many of you for the positive feedback we have received about our Easter activities, weekly online learning opportunities and the letters the children were sent last week.

I cannot tell you how hard it is to be in school each day without the constant quiet murmur of children learning, the hubbub at playtimes and the laughter and smiley faces everywhere. We are all missing the children very much, and it goes without saying that they are still the most valued part of our school community. PLEASE let them know that we haven't forgotten them!

I have also heard from several of you who are concerned about your child's education, which is completely understandable. All I can say is, please stop worrying. The most important thing you can do right now is prioritise your own and your children's wellbeing. If this means not doing the Learning from Home or watching educational videos, then don't. There is huge value in just playing in the garden, building dens, making cakes, drawing, playing Lego or reading. Please see the excellent advice from the British Psychological Society which we have included on the *Helping your Child – Emotional Wellbeing* tab of our Family Support web page: <https://www.queensinclosure.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=Family+Support&pid=99>

Please be assured that once we are all back at school, we will resume our role as educators and put every effort into helping the children come to terms with this huge event in their lives and fill any gaps in their learning.

Meanwhile, look after yourselves and please stay safe.

Mrs Allen

Online Support for Families

At this unique time, we have been busy adding new content to our website in an effort to provide quick access to useful information. In particular, we hope that the following pages are helpful:

Family Support <https://www.queensinclosure.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=Family+Support&pid=99>

Under the 'Parent' tab, this page aims to provide guidance and links suitable for families who may be feeling the strain of lockdown. Various subjects are featured, from emotional wellbeing, guidance to help your child sleep, and motivation for learning to coping with behavioural issues.

Keeping Well <https://www.queensinclosure.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=Keeping+Well&pid=82>

With a similar theme, this page is for children – although we would suggest that the content is accessed with an adult. There are a number of resources for children who may be worried about Coronavirus.

Do keep an eye on our website to see what is available as we are updating information and adding to the content regularly.

Online Learning Resources

In addition to providing Key Worker childcare in school, our teaching staff are working hard behind the scenes, planning and producing a range of learning activities for each year group, which we add each week to our website. I would like to reassure you that these activities are intended as a guide only, to provide some continuity and structure for the children. We do not expect you to complete everything included on the Year Group Outlines, or limit yourselves to our suggestions. Please feel free to use alternative sources, such as those listed below, and follow your child's own interests or inspirations if that's easier.

We have also added some information and activities for VE Day this Friday, as an additional tab on our Learning from Home web page:

<https://www.queensinclosure.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=Learning+from+Home+during+School+Closure&pid=77>

We will be continuing with our carefully considered decision not to offer live or video lessons. However, the Government has endorsed some fantastic learning resources available online that you may find very useful to access at home.

BBC Teach offers live lessons for primary age children:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/live-lessons/primary-live-lessons/zmc9jhw>

BBC Bitesize has daily lessons and activities: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/dailylessons>

Parents and children can also access the national online classroom:

Oak National Academy: <https://www.thenational.academy/information-for-parents-pupils/>

Easy to navigate and all accessible online, we have also included some of these resources in our weekly Learning Outlines as weblinks.

Provision and Communication

We understand that families are all experiencing this 'lockdown' situation differently and we are trying our best to reassure and respond appropriately. As we all know, schools have taken on a completely different role to that which we would normally carry out – and even this, many weeks in, it is still taking some getting used to. DfE guidance states:

"We understand that these are extraordinary times. The most important thing is that children of critical workers and vulnerable children are supervised and properly cared for at school. Emergency legislation will lift curriculum requirements for schools, giving flexibility to provide support, activities and education in the way they see fit..."

The provision we put in place was initially based on the understanding that we were facing a 2 week 'partial closure', before Easter - which was then extended into the Summer Term. We are fully aware that this coming weekend, the guidance from the Government may change again regarding our role. As we get more clarity on the expectations of schools, we will review the actions we are taking and endeavour to keep you informed of any changes. We will continue exploring additional systems and communication methods, as a way to further enhance our provision for the children. We have received feedback from some of you and staff have shared some of their ideas too, all of which we will be considering in the coming weeks.

We hope that you are all referencing the **Year Group Learning Outlines** at the start of each week as they give you the full overview of all the tasks and web links for activities that we would recommend for each week's entire learning offer. We are aware that some of our parents are unable to access the 'Learning from Home' on our website and so we will gladly continue to provide printed packs of learning for children where necessary. Please do contact us if this would also be helpful to you.

We have been making telephone calls to various families and, of course, been only too happy to respond to any phone requests as soon as the relevant staff have been able to do so. We have not attempted to call everyone, as we believed our 'open door policy' (albeit currently virtual) was more pertinent to this situation than ever before. Our door has always been, and will always continue to be, open to you all.

We are aware that there has been some questioning of our approach to communication, and understand that this has been perceived in different ways. To limit any further confusion and misunderstanding, and to ensure consistency across the school, we invite you to request a call if you or your child would like to talk to their teacher. A Teacher Contact Request facility has been added to our website:

<https://www.queensinclosure.hants.sch.uk/form/?pid=2&form=173>

We may adapt this approach, as the situation evolves.

We hope that the children have enjoyed our recent letters and the little notes we add to the Year Group Learning Outlines each week.

We are always delighted to hear how you and your children are doing at home, and the messages we have received from you to update us about what you have been up to at home have been wonderful. We continue to welcome them!

I would like to take the opportunity to affirm that our actions and provision have been based on extensive and well-informed guidance from the Government guidance, professional educational organisations, staff expertise, Governor input and cross-school liaison. The decisions that we have made regarding provision, systems and communication and whether we choose to use – or not use – various options, have been thoroughly thought out, with factors to consider that may not always be evident. It goes without saying, that these decisions are made with the well-being and care of the children, their families and our school staff at the core. We will always make every effort to try and support you and your children in any way we can, and are endeavouring to do our best in these troubling times. We appreciate that you are too, as we are all in this together – and we hope that strength will come from our partnership.

Emergency Childcare for Key Workers

Due to the Coronavirus outbreak, the government re-directed the role of schools to provide childcare for children of Key Workers who have no alternative provision. As a result, although schools were 'closed' on 23rd March, QI, like most schools, has been open and staffed each week – including through the Easter break – providing emergency childcare.

Before accessing this service, Key Workers were asked to register and complete a declaration online, ensuring that they met the required criteria. In an effort to ensure that staff and children remain safe, we are now asking Key Worker parents to complete a Health Declaration if their child has been absent for any period greater than 7 calendar days. Please see:

<https://www.queensinclosure.hants.sch.uk/form/?pid=79&form=139>

We are grateful that the majority of Key Workers have been able to keep their children at home. For those where this has not been possible, we are glad to be able to play our part in ensuring that work critical to combating COVID-19 is able to continue. Thank you all.



Free School Meals

As well as providing food for the children in school as usual, we have also been working with our caterers, HC3S, to provide weekly food parcels for children eligible for Free School Meals. These are families who are in receipt of qualifying benefits and who have indicated to us that continued support of this nature would be helpful. If you think you may be eligible and would like further information, please see:

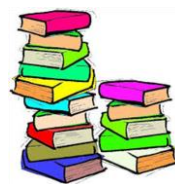
<https://www.queensinclosure.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=School+Meals&pid=87>

Free eBook and Audio Book Loans for Children

If you can only do one educational thing with your child, please make sure they read! To help with this, we hope you will have already made use of our new facility to access free eBook and audio book loans through the **School Library Service**. Usernames and passwords were texted to parents on 27th April and children can sign in through the link on our website:

<https://www.queensinclosure.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=School+Library+Service&pid=95>

Should you experience any problems, please use the Contact Page of the SLS portal and our administrator will respond to you as soon as possible. 😊



INSET / Diary Dates 2020

We will contact parents as soon as we have confirmation from the government regarding the re-opening of our school.

(Summer Half Term from **25th to 29th May**)

(Last Day of Summer Term on **22nd July**)

Feedback Opportunity

The staff and governors of QI are always appreciative of your views on the school and its performance; to ensure continual improvement, we need to understand the perception our families have of our care and provision for their children. We invite parents to give feedback at any time throughout the year, at present through the facility on our website.