



7th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope that this newsletter finds you all well and in good spirits as we go into the long weekend.

You should now be receiving weekly home learning packs by email from your class teachers. Your class teacher is available via their class email address to answer any queries regarding these packs. We are very happy to speak to you on the phone, it is best to email your class teacher to check which days they are in school if you need to speak to them specifically. Please remember, we can provide you with printed copies of anything you are unable to print or access via the web. Chestnut and Oak Classes have some images of shared homelearning on their class pages on the school website. Please feel free to email your class teachers (giving them permission to use images on the school website) if you have any school learning your child might wish to share with their friends. It is a great way for the children to continue to see each other and share their experiences of learning at home.

As you will be aware, there is constant speculation in the media regarding the re-opening of school, when this will be and how it might work. At present, we have no more information than is in the press. We will however contact you with any information as soon as we have it. We remain open for children of key workers, vulnerable children and children with EHCPs who need us. Please let us know if your child is in one of these groups and you may need to bring them to school.

Please continue to contact your class teacher via the new class email addresses set up if you have any questions related to the work. Any general queries are welcome using the email address admin@mendleshamschool.org.uk or via phone.

Best wishes

Tessa Sait

Stories to share during lockdown.

Many families will be supporting relatives and their communities during the lockdown. We are happy to hear and share what you have been up to. Click the link below to see a local news clip shared with us by Lorraine Turner (Zain's mum). She is helping surgeries in Stowmarket to deliver prescriptions, Zain often goes with her to help.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000hs2m/look-east-lunchtime-news-30042020>

If you have any stories you or your child want to share, please email them in, including any rainbow pictures or art you have created that we can share in our newsletters

Free School Meal Vouchers

The government have given some more flexibility on the issuing of these vouchers. Due to the high volume of traffic in the system, we will now be issuing vouchers of double to value, but fortnightly. Hopefully, this will reduce the number of times anyone has to access the system and therefore speed it up!

Tips for extending your child's reading skills

1. Have your child discuss, draw or write a profile about a character. Think particularly about the emotional side of the character and ask your child to show evidence from the text.
2. Ask if your child would like to redesign the book cover to suit the part of the story they are reading.
3. Ask your child to write, draw or make a video clip advertising the book to who they think the target audience is, explaining what it is about and why they should read it.

Tips for supporting early reading at home

It is worth remembering that children are likely to have very different learning behaviours at home than at school. You can always contact your class teacher if you are worried. Please let us know if you need additional reading books.

Reading for pleasure is the end goal, so enjoying books together and reading books to your child that they enjoy is equally as important as them reading to you.

Before reading, allow your child time to look at the book and discuss the front cover and what it might be about.

1. When reading, give your child time to sound out words using their phonic knowledge.
2. If they are struggling encourage them to say the sounds again, more quickly a few times – often they can then hear the word.
3. If they can't, sound the word for them, encouraging them to join in with you until you both agree the word.
4. Tricky words (like the, was, they) which cannot be sounded out need to be learnt and remembered. You can remind your child if they have forgotten, but ensure they say the word too.
5. When they finish reading, discuss what has been read, what might happen next, whether they like the book and why. Ask who, why, what and where questions about the text.
6. Finally, revisit some words your child found tricky to read.

Support for Mental Well-being During the Lockdown.

You can always call us for advice and support, the school nursing team is still operating and we can sign post you to a variety of organisations for additional support – for yourself or your child. You might find the following useful:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

www.samaritans.org.uk

Here is a short activity to do with your child if they are worrying about coronavirus

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/cco-childrens-guide-to-coronavirus.pdf>