



This is not the newsletter I expected to be writing on our return to school. Even so I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year. Things can only get better!

We find ourselves again in lockdown. I would firstly like to thank everyone for their amazing patience, kindness, support and resilience to learn the new remote learning skills. I know it has been a very steep learning curve for a lot of families. The expectation is that we are setting this volume of work and we are also expected to contact you if children are not engaging. I know it is difficult, I know you are trying to juggle working from home too-just do your best! That is all anyone can do at this time.

I would ask you to be mindful that school is open to the large amount of critical worker families (the demand has doubled from March and I don't have double the staff and double the space). The teachers are working in school, managing the high expectations of remote learning and organising paper packs of work. Please be kind, they are under a lot of pressure at the moment. They are, as always, professional, dedicated, hardworking, creative, positive and committed to supporting our school community through this difficult time.



Critical Worker Places at School

We are working hard to support our community and meet the needs of critical workers. Please remember what you WANT (and what is 'easier' for you) is very different to what you NEED!

Regardless of your job, critical or not, the expectation is that children should be at home, even if you are working from home.

Please do not request what you do not need.

Please do not be selfish in taking a place that could be offered to someone who is a critical worker.

Please do not ask for full time school if you can re-organise meetings/shifts and have a part time place at school.

Please do not phone us up to be verbally abusive because you aren't getting your own way!

If you require an exercise book to complete work in to reduce printing etc. or are having issues uploading work and would prefer to take a photograph and upload that, I will leave some in the reception area.

Please just take one per child. Thank you.

If your circumstances have changed and you think you may now be eligible for benefits related Free School Meals please contact the school office. We can send you a form to complete to apply.

It is also our plan to invite the children, not in school, to a Teams meeting so they can have face to face contact with their teacher and a group from their class.

Technology

We unfortunately do not have a magical supply of laptops to send home. I know the media portrays the situation differently. Griffe Field has an allocation of 8 laptops and we have currently received 2 of that allocation.

I have sourced 20 SIMS cards with 30GB of free data for 90 days. If you are using a mobile phone to access home learning and data is an issue please call the school office. These will be allocated to Free School Meal eligible children first.

As a school we can also apply for an increase of mobile data if you do not have fixed broadband at home and cannot afford additional data. The networks this applies to are -Three, Smarty, Virgin Mobile, EE, Tesco or Sky Mobile.

You need to contact school NEXT WEEK with the following information

- account holder name
- mobile number of the device
- Network
- pay as you go or monthly contract.

You can also access Teams via an Xbox or Play Station 4/5