

Prior's Mill C.E. Primary School

Clifton Avenue, Billingham. Stockton-on-Tees, TS22 5BX

Tel: 01642 650 426

Email: office@priorsmill.org.uk



15th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE DURING NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

It has been very sobering to see the national infection and death rates rise to such high numbers and the local picture is also concerning with Stockton's rate at 388 per 100 000 people. There is no doubt that we must do all we can to follow the rules of this national lockdown to protect each other and our NHS.

The government amended the wording of their guidance regarding school attendance at the weekend to clarify that school attendance is available for children of critical workers whose parents are not available to care for them at home:

“Parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can.”

With this in mind, I must stress that school provision in this category is just for those children who **cannot** stay home. I must ensure that I am protecting those that **have** to attend – children and staff – by reducing the number of households people come into contact with. Clearly the risk of infection and transmission increases with the more contacts we have which is why all of us are banned from mixing with other households socially. If you are a critical worker and you are at home, please do keep your child with you for the overall safety of everyone concerned.

REMOTE LEARNING

Thank You

Thank you again for another very busy week with remote learning. As I write this, I can see that there have been nearly nine thousand posts and nine thousand comments on SeeSaw in the last five school days which indicates a fantastic level of interaction happening! We do appreciate that home schooling puts significant additional pressure on parents and carers and we are really grateful for all the time and support you are providing. Please know that you are doing an amazing job!

Expectations

We know that some days will be better than others and, on these days, it may be possible for your child to complete more work; we don't expect it to be a perfect picture every day – if at all! We also firmly believe that your child's and your family's wellbeing is a priority and each family needs to find a way of working through this period of remote learning that works for them. We are keen to help you in any way we can so please do get in touch with us if you would like any advice or support or just want to talk to us about managing remote learning.

Feedback and Next Steps

We are constantly reviewing our remote learning offer and improving practice based on feedback from you and the children. I am really pleased that Ofsted have published a short guide to what works well in remote education and our offer sits very well within their recommendations and findings. You can read the document [here](#). I do want to thank all the staff for their hard work and professional learning as everybody



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has worked their socks off to switch to this new way of teaching. Thank you again for some of the lovely comments you have made – members of staff have very much appreciated the encouragements.

We are keen to find ways to help the children stay in touch with each other and keep their social connections going. We plan to trial a class Zoom call next week with one class to test out the best way to set these up for all children in KS1 and KS2. Watch this space!

I am also keen to sustain our sense of Christian community through providing the opportunity for weekly worship. Starting Monday, I will introduce a collective worship video that I hope gives the children and anyone else who watches something to reflect on and maybe take some inspiration from.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

The government are re-introducing the national voucher scheme for children in receipt of free school meals who are not attending school. We plan to be able to offer the vouchers in the same way as during the spring lockdown through Edenred from week commencing 25th January. Food hampers will be provided next week.

SCHOOL EMAIL ADDRESSES

Thank you for using our new email addresses this week to help us with directing queries to the relevant person. As a reminder, I have repeated this information from last week:

OFFICE	For all general enquiries including requests for contact with a member of staff or for support with remote learning	office@priorsmill.org.uk
TESTS	To notify school of any positive pupils COVID test results	tests@priorsmill.org.uk
During Restricted Attendance/Partial Closure		
BOOKINGS	To request a place for Reception to Y6 Attendance during Lockdown	bookings@priorsmill.org.uk
PRESCHOOL/ NURSERY	To request a place for Pre-School or Nursery Attendance during Lockdown	nurserybookings@priorsmill.org.uk

I hope you have an enjoyable and restful weekend; stay safe everyone!

Kind regards,
Mrs H Malbon
Headteacher

