



01432 265 153

admin@brookfield.hereford.sch.uk

Grandstand Road, Hereford, HR4 9NG



15th May 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Families,

As we reach the end of another week in lockdown can I say another big thanks you to you all for keeping you and your child(ren) going through this difficult time. There has been a lot of speculation in the media about how and when children may return to school and whether it is safe to do so, and I know that is causing many people anxiety.

Immediately following the Government's announcement on Sunday evening, we have been carefully considering how best to continue our high standards of safe practice whilst increasing our numbers, especially in Primary where we already have around half of our pupils accessing the school.

To clarify, there is **no obligation for the pupils to attend school unless you have a social worker where there is an expectation to attend**. All penalties regarding non-attendance have been suspended. The Government's plans show an understanding that some families may wish to continue to home educate in order to keep as safe as possible. We will be contacting you via phone to find out your intentions on your child/children returning.

Safety of our pupils and staff is our number one priority. We have separated children into small groups and spread them across the building with 1 or 2 staff members. Children are kept in these groups every day; they may not necessarily be with their usual class teacher/ TAs or in their usual classroom but we will do our utmost to make sure there is someone who knows them well. They will also eat in this room and will have access to PE facilities and outside play at staggered times. Each child will have their own pencil case/ equipment to enable access to as full a curriculum as possible. Games which can be played whilst safely distanced and where equipment can be disinfected will be encouraged, as will access to the outdoors. Each child will also have access to a computer and to an individual set of headphones.

It is important to say that- despite the Government's best intentions and our own appropriate measures- we cannot guarantee that any children attending will not come into physical contact with another child. Our aim (in accordance with the guidance schools have been given) is to socially distance the cohort, not the individuals. We will endeavor to avoid contact, but - considering the ages and additional needs of our pupils- this will be extremely challenging.

www.brookfield.hereford.sch.uk



01432 265 153

admin@brookfield.hereford.sch.uk

Grandstand Road, Hereford, HR4 9NG



In line with government guidelines, it is important to note that in the unlikely event that any child or adult within a group is confirmed to have Covid-19 (through testing) the whole of this group will need to quarantine for 14 days. If symptoms of coughing and temperature are displayed – the standard self-isolation rules will apply. If your child develops a cough or high temperature during the school day, we will contact you immediately and ask that you pick up your child.

We are currently finalising a plan to enable staggered start and finish times, additional cleaning regimes and transport timetables for after half term. There will be changes to the length of the school day therefore and potentially to pick up and drop off times for buses. We will let you know via text/ email or call what time your child will be picked up and dropped off. Please be patient with us – social distancing means that only a third of pupils can be on the bus which is making transport times much longer than usual. **If you can transport your child or walk to school please help us by doing so.**

If your child will not be attending school, we will expect them to complete some work each day. The amount of work will depend on their age and level of development – some pupils will be able to work independently for example, while others may only complete an hour each day and will need support. I will be in touch about these arrangements next week.

For now though, I hope you have a good weekend and I will be in touch again with more information. Please don't hesitate to call or email me if you want to discuss any aspect of this or if you want your child to attend school (full or part time).

Best wishes

Michelle Parkes

01432 265153

07979927617

mparkes@brookfield.hereford.sch.uk

www.brookfield.hereford.sch.uk



01432 265 153

admin@brookfield.hereford.sch.uk

Grandstand Road, Hereford, HR4 9NG



UPDATES AND INFORMATION:

Information from West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre

You may have seen the recent alarming headlines regarding concerns that sex Offenders are targeting children and young people online in their own homes during Lockdown. These articles are based on an assessment by the National Crime Agency (NCA) which says there are at least 300,000 sex abusers in the U.K. posing a threat to children and young people.

<https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/onlinesafetyathome>

The NCA is urging children, parents and carers to ensure they are safe online and has launched a package of educational aids to be used in home schooling.

To illustrate the risks the agency has produced a series of 15-minute activity packages for parents and carers to complete with children. They are available on the NCA's social media platforms and the website

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

A survey led by child protection specialists the Ineqe Safeguarding Group, revealed that:

- one-in-10 seven to 17-year-olds claim they are unmonitored online during the lockdown as their parents struggle to cope with working from home and home schooling
- a fifth of those surveyed admitted chatting to strangers online and that children as young as seven spend nearly three hours a week broadcasting live videos of themselves
- a rise of 17% in live streaming since the schools closed
- nearly three-quarters of children had a camera on their computers

Ineqe Safeguarding Group CEO Jim Gamble said: "Whilst everyone is locked down in their homes, there may be a tendency to think that our children and young people are somehow safer, simply because we know exactly where they are. However, the truth is that they might not be.

"Children will be spending more time online than ever before. They may be tempted to join groups, share intimate images and participate in live-streaming activity as they attempt to build an online audience.



01432 265 153

admin@brookfield.hereford.sch.uk

Grandstand Road, Hereford, HR4 9NG



"We can't ignore the fact that sex offenders are also sitting at home and most will access the internet."

To report online abuse visit <https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>

If you require further information on support available from a Children's Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (CHISVA) or Childrens Counsellor following an incident of online abuse, please visit our website www.wmrsasc.org.uk or call us on 01905 611655.