Civitas Academy Bulletin

23/03/20



**Update from Mr Wieder**

I would like to begin the bulletin with acknowledging the fantastic support of the school community in pulling together to support one another during this unprecedented time. Staff worked tirelessly last week to ensure that learning packs were prepared before closure on Friday. We also were busy in making changes to our provision in order to continue a service for children of key workers, children with an EHCP or an allocated social worker. This service began today. I would like to reiterate that this service should only be used if absolutely necessary as it is essential that we keep to the social distancing measures introduced to keep people safe. Remember, the fewer children making journeys, the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk.

**Communication**

I will continue to send the bulletin out weekly during term time to keep families updated. I will also keep the front page of the website updated with key messages.

A reminder that any learning based questions, should be directed to the year group email addresses as communicated in the closure letter. Any other correspondence can be directed to [office@civitasacademy.co.uk](mailto:office@civitasacademy.co.uk) and it will be forwarded to the relevant person.

**Miss Vaal**

At the end of this term, we will be sadly saying farewell to Miss Vaal, our P.E. teacher. Miss Vaal has been instrumental in improving P.E. provision at the school. During her time at Civitas, the school has significantly increased participation in competitions and as a result secured the School Games Silver Award last year. Miss Vaal has secured a job at a local private school and we wish her all the best for the future. She has promised to come back and say farewell to all of the children at some point when school returns to normal!

We have made interim plans to cover for Miss Vaal until the end of the academic year, which I will share with you the children return.

**Free School Meals/ Breakfasts**

Last week, we set up a system to support families entitled to free school meals during this period. Families or a representative would be able to collect a meal and a breakfast between 9:20am and 9:30am from the Crumbs food van outside the school. Today nobody turned up to collect their meal. If your child is entitled to a free school meal and you do not require this service, please could you indicate to us so that we need not waste food.

**Home Learning Packs**

This is a new approach to all of us and we welcome feedback. It is likely that these will develop further over the coming weeks. This week’s packs have already gone out (week 1) and week 2 will be ready and on the website by next Monday. These packs will be created during term time only. I would also like to draw your attention to the useful websites for home learning section that contains websites approved by our teachers for educational content.

**Signposting**

In these uncertain times, I would like to signpost families to relevant agencies for advice if they require support during this difficult period. Please find links to the following that may be able to support individual family circumstances:

**Citizens Advice:**

https://[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you/)

**Universal Credit:**

https://[www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus/](http://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus/)

**ReadiFood is an independent Food Bank providing food parcels to those in severe need:**

https://readifood.org.uk/

**The Faith Organisation can also support with food parcels**:

Call 01189872672

**You can contact Reading Borough Council for any general enquiries such as housing, benefits or general advice:**

Call 01189373641

**First days charity are offering families in financial difficulty who are experiencing increased pressure due to coronavirus a pack including nappies, wipes and other essential toiletries to help them at this time.**

https://[www.firstdays.net/emergency-toiletries](http://www.firstdays.net/emergency-toiletries)

**Home start Reading offer support to parents who are overwhelmed by their difficulties:**

https://[www.home-start-reading.org.uk/](http://www.home-start-reading.org.uk/)

**Reading Voluntary Action:**

<http://rva.org.uk/coronavirus-community-action/>

**Support for children’s mental health:**

https://www.minded.org.uk/

[**https://youngminds.org.uk/media/3695/how-to-support-your-child\_corona.pdf**](https://youngminds.org.uk/media/3695/how-to-support-your-child_corona.pdf)

**Final Word**

Now is the time to reconnect with our children and find a ‘new norm’ for the coming weeks or months ahead. Find time to complete the learning packs with your child, but also balance it with time to actively engage with one another. Read books together; play games and puzzles; build projects; cook a meal together; exercise together. Encourage the children to keep a diary of events in what will be a significant period in history. Share photographs and talk about our own family histories to our children. The key thing is that our children have the opportunity to learn so much from being at home and let’s make the most of this unique situation.

**2019-20 Key Dates (All subject to change)**

**Summer**

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| --- | --- |
| **Date and Time** | **Event** |
| Monday 20th April | Children return to school (subject to change) |
| Monday 18th- Friday 22nd May | Mental Health Week |
| Monday 25th-Friday 29th May | Half Term |
| Monday 8th-Friday 12th June | Cultural Diversity Week |
| Friday 12th June | International Day |
| Wednesday 1st July | Transition Day |
| Friday 10th July | Reports Out |
| Friday 17th July | Last day of term for children |