



Friday 17th April 2020

Dear Parents

I hope that this newsletter finds you and your family keeping well and enjoying the sunshine we have been blessed with over the last few weeks.

As you may have heard, yesterday's announcement from the [Government](#) we are to remain in lockdown for a further three weeks. This means that school will remain open only for those children of critical workers and those who are vulnerable and cannot be safely cared for at home. This is to help prevent the spread of the virus. Please get in touch by email at head@upperarley.worcs.sch.uk should you need to access the provision in school or discuss any issues you may have.

Teaching and support staff will continue to provide learning activities for children to access at home using the online platforms Seesaw and Edmodo. Other activities and routes into learning will continue to be shared with you to choose from, as we know that children need a variety and will find something new or different a challenge. Keeping a structured routine for children and families is important and key to living harmoniously in a small space for any length of time. We understand that this can be challenging with multiple users of equipment and bandwidth, please be reassured that no one will be holding you to account for work incomplete or not attempted. The important thing is that children are accessing some form of learning, be it practically or by using other methods, so that they keep moving forward with learning, practising or rehearsing what they know is just as good as learning new information as they will be better prepared for when they do return to school.

We continue to receive regular updates from Public Health England, Department for Education, Worcestershire Children's First and the Diocese of Worcester. I have included some of the resources they have shared that you may find useful during this unusual period at home. Please do feel that you can reach out for support or guidance whatever your needs may be.

Free Covid 19 [book](#) link for children free to download.

Free School Meals

As a result of the current situation you may have found yourself being furloughed or even unemployed temporarily. This may entitle you to support with school meals. FSM could be claimed if furlough wages or reduced hours bring income to the qualifying benefit levels. Please see the information in this link to see if you benefit. (Even if only in the short term)

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

For those families who are entitled to FSM vouchers, I am constantly in touch with the Department for Education and Edenred who are organising them. They are aware that some schools have not yet received the vouchers and despite the vouchers being re-sent, families still have not received them. I am assured that this is being rectified and they will be with you as soon as they have sorted it. Frustratingly, there is little I can do to help.

HERE 2 HELP WORCESTERSHIRE



Here2Help is a countywide campaign and community response to provide help and support to vulnerable people and families affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is led and coordinated by Worcestershire County Council, supported by a growing network of individuals, groups and organisations across the county.

How does it work?

Here2Help is about making sure that anyone who is vulnerable during this pandemic is able access the help and support they need to prevent them from getting into crisis. There are three ways this is being done:

1. Providing information, advice and resources to enable self-help wherever possible. On the Here2Help website (<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help>) there are a growing number of resources to help families entertain and educate their children, support their mental health, maintain their wellbeing at home, for instance.
2. People can **request help** by completing the short on-line form on the website or via a dedicated phone number, 01905 768053, which is open from 8am to 8pm seven days a week. As of 15th April, there had been 1,312 “requests for help” received by Here2Help. Each request which is received is picked up by a WCC or WCF member of staff who then works with the person requesting help to match them to the appropriate information and support. This might be related to access to food and medicine, help and support with childcare and looking after children, community help with money and wellbeing, for instance.
3. People, groups and organisations can also **offer help** by completing a short on-line form on the website. As of 15th April, there had been 1,359 “offers of help”, which are being matched to the requests for help the campaign is receiving.

Other links to support:

- a. Here2Help: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help
- b. Starting Well: <https://www.hacw.nhs.uk/starting-well/>
- c. SEND Local Offer: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/send

The campaign is evolving and developing all the time in response to national guidance and local demand. If there are emerging issues, ideas and resources not already being covered by Here2Help then please get in touch with WCF via commissioning@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

[Top tips for families - National Autistic Society](#)

[ADHD Parenting Tips – Help Guide](#)

[Managing the transition to homeschooling for children with SEND - UCL](#)

Resources for well being

[The Great Indoors: 100 ideas & activities to inspire young minds at home - Scouts](#)

[Simple self-soothe strategies - Creative Education, Dr Pooky Knightsmith](#)

[Stay mentally well during Covid-19 - Creative Education, Dr Pooky Knightsmith](#)

[Spread a little kindness](#)

Are you a parent or a carer in Worcestershire?

Do you have children with additional needs or communication difficulties?

It is a difficult time for everyone. As adults it is difficult for us to take in all of the information and change that Covid-19 has caused in our lives.

It is even harder to help children and young people cope with all the uncertainties and disruption. Children who are feeling anxious and unsettled often show this in many different ways, including through their behaviour or communication.

We are here to help you.

You can email us for support - one of our team will call you back.

You can find resources related to Covid-19 on our website below. We are adding new resources every week.



Follow us on Facebook : Worcestershire Speech and Language Therapy

Find us on Twitter @SLT_Worcs

Website: <http://www.hacw.nhs.uk/sltcovid19>

Email: WHCNHS.sltcovid19@nhs.net

Getting through COVID-19



We are unsure of what lies ahead and how long this current situation will continue for so I have included the [latest guidance](#) should you wish to read it. **I will keep you updated through the website and Parent Mail** so please ensure that you check and let us know if you change your details ASAP. I am aware that some email addresses we have for families are no longer used/valid. If you think this maybe you, please email the office@upperarley.worcs.sch.uk and update us.

As your children may be spending more time online, I felt that it was important to share with you latest online guidance, support and tips to keep them safe in their activities and learning.

- [Think You Know](#) (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online)
- [Internet matters](#)
- [Parent info](#)
- [Net-aware\(support for parents and careers from the NSPCC\)](#)

I will be in touch as the next few weeks pass but in the meantime, I wish you all good health and am looking forward to seeing you all again very soon, school is very quiet without your children, we do miss them.

My best wishes for you all, stay safe and look after your loved ones.

Mrs Langfield