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18th October 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

With Brexit approaching on the 31st October, and a fair degree of uncertainty around the arrangements it will involve, we wanted to send a letter to inform you of the plans and procedures we have in place to cope with the predicted possible difficulties. As you may be aware, we are a member of a group representing special schools across the whole of Kent (KsENT) and all special schools have agreed we will remain open wherever/whenever safe to do so. In order to be able to respond to situations as they arise, we will follow similar arrangements to those we follow when we are expecting heavy snow. Namely, that we will use text to parents and local radio websites to let everyone know if it is not safe to open the school due to staff or pupils being unable to reach the site.

Our young people may face particular difficulties in coping with the extended journey times, medical shortages and potential special dietary needs predicted and we are doing all we can to prepare for these eventualities. Our primary concern, as always, is the safe education of our young people and we are seeking to do all we can to allow us to continue to provide that safe education.

Without wishing to panic anyone(!) we thought it would be useful to let you know what we are doing / preparing to do. The following headings will provide key information for you during this potentially disruptive time:

School Food

We have contacted our supplier directly to ensure there is robust planning in place in regards to food. Our suppliers have ensured us that they will still have access to the stock we use and are looking at how they arrange the transportation to the school directly. We are therefore as confident as we can be we will be able to feed our staff and pupils!

Medicines and Medical Products

The Department of Health and Social care have been working with trade bodies, product suppliers, and the health and care system to make detailed plans that should ensure continuation of the supply of medical products. Medication in school will remain the same as per school policy. In order to ensure pupils attend school safely we will liaise with parents over their ability to give their child their essential medication. Should pupils need to attend school with no medication, then please inform the school with at least 24 hours' notice so a decision can be made in line with School Policy and expectations regarding their safe attendance at Five Acre Wood School.

Medicines should be available from your GP or Hospital as normal, although if in short supply, an alternative may be offered. For specific advice on medicines, please refer to the NHS guidance: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/medicines-information/getting-your-medicines-if-theres-no-deal-eu-exit/>



Travel Disruption

There is a possibility of temporary disruption at Kent ports, which could impact on the travel to our school. Kent County Council Highways assure us that they have undertaken modelling of potential scenarios and have effective measures in place with Kent Police, the Highways Agency and port authorities. We can only guess at what degree of difficulty we will face in getting staff and students into school. Prior to your child setting out for school, please be mindful of any changes to their journey that may impede their ability to get to school. Watch out for texts to say whether the roads around the school are closed / gridlocked as you would do if it was winter weather.

Our transport providers have said they'll let us know as soon as possible if they encounter difficulties before or during their journeys and as with bad weather, they may decide not to attempt their journey to collect your child.

School Closure in Exceptional Circumstances

As a school we will do all we can to avoid any sort of unplanned closure and will remain open wherever it is reasonable to do so. The school does have an existing continuity plan in place to deal with unforeseen or unavoidable events, for example widespread disruption to travel.

We do not expect that the school will need to close and there are contingency plans in place that may allow the school to remain open for some or all pupils. In the unlikely event of the school closing (in part or all of the school) then the decision will be based on a common sense approach, having regard to the wider circumstance - including parents', teacher's and transports' ability to travel - and the need to continue to provide an education to children wherever feasible to do so. We are assured that Kent County Council will work with any school to take all the necessary steps to prevent any negative impact to educational outcomes for pupils involved if closing the school were unavoidable.

Any updates will be put out on via our own website, via text messaging to all parents/carers and local radio wherever possible.

We are hoping that all the above precautions and arrangements won't need to be put in place but with all the press coverage, we hope that this letter has assured you that we are planning for those difficulties are predictable and will be responding to any difficulties that arise on the day.

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact my PA, Hannah Stewart on Timwilliamspa@five-acre.kent.sch.uk

Kind regards



Tim Williams | Headteacher (Boughton Lane)