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Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you, your children and all your loved-ones are well.

Now that we are into our second week of school closure and social distancing, I want to give you some information about what will happen regarding the children's work after the Easter holiday period. I am also including some information on the government free school meals scheme and a few other things.

What work will the children do after the Easter holiday?

We are going to give you the option to continue to have a physical pack of work after the Easter holidays. Teachers will ask you if you want physical packs through Dojo. If you are happy to access the work through your own devices, then you are welcome to do this. If you want paper copies then we will arrange for you to collect packs from school. We will continue to do this in a safe way and will contact you soon regarding when this can be done. The work will last for another 2 weeks in the first instance. The work will be in the same vein as before, as feedback suggests that it has been appropriate and manageable. We will continue to Dojo children daily and put the work and messages on the website. Work won't be set over the Easter holidays, so please don't start packs ahead of time.

Thank you for everything you are doing to support your children with home learning. This is no easy task, however, between parents and teachers, I think we are doing a good job under the circumstances. Most parents now feel that they have a routine that works for them - each family will work differently depending on all sorts of factors, such as the number and ages of children, access to work space and computers etc I think the right way to do this is really the way that works for you. Sharing your tips with other parents is worth doing – I know some children put their uniform on to do their school work, then get changed when they've finished. If this helps, then why not? Do what works for you. Feedback has been positive overall and children seem to be doing well, however, if you have a day where the children's work doesn't quite go to plan then try not to worry too much – teachers have those days too! There is a summary of ideas on the Study Page of the parent section of the website called *Supporting Home Learning* that you may find helpful.

What is happening with Free School Meals? (benefit-related not Universal Free School Meals)

As you know the school has been providing free school meals in the form of food parcels for the last two weeks. The government has now issued information regarding the government scheme for vouchers which makes clear that schools are expected to continue to provide meals or food parcels as a preference unless they are unable to do so.

*'Where schools are **not able** to provide eligible pupils not attending school with meals or food parcels through their current food provider, they can provide eligible families with supermarket vouchers in term time weeks.'*

At present we are able to continue to provide parcels. We will contact all parents again who qualify for benefit-related free school meals so that they can order their next parcel.

National government Free School Meals are only provided during term-time; however, Birmingham LEA are providing vouchers to cover the 2-week Easter holiday period so we will get these to families for the start of the holidays. Again, these only relate to benefit-related free school meals.

Residential Visits

I have had a few enquiries regarding the residential visits and the part-payments that have been made by parents. As it stands, the trips have not been cancelled, only deferred. Should the school cancel, we would lose any money paid. I will keep you updated regarding this situation.

Communication

For reasons of social distancing, there are safe, but minimal numbers of staff actually in the school building to look after the children of key workers and to complete any administration tasks that can't be done remotely. We are officially 'closed' to most of our children; however, we are still very much here for them and for you, should you need us. Remember that you can still contact your teacher directly through Class Dojo and any other member of staff through enquiry@northfieldmanoracademy.co.uk

Thank you once again for your support throughout this challenging time. And thank you for your kind and supportive comments, I know they mean a great deal to all the staff at Northfield Manor, including myself.

Best wishes. Stay safe.

Mrs Pennington

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