24 March 2021

Dear Mums, Dads and Carers,

I hope you are well and still basking in not having to do home learning!

Thank you so much to everyone who completed our home learning survey. I am absolutely delighted that those who responded were so incredibly positive about what school and teachers did during lockdown; we all know things were very challenging both for you at home and for school staff so words of appreciation and thanks have been extremely well received by staff. Thank you once again, we will share the survey results with you all as soon as possible!

Feedback during parents’ evening telephone conversations is excellent too, thanks.

**School life**

Y1 have enjoyed two wonderful visits to Marshalls Arm nature reserve this week; getting outside at this time of year is brilliant and the children were all telling me about the bird song and blossom!

Please see the attached flier about OSCA Bingo tomorrow night. If you are able to support this that would be great, Jo Tilley and Anna Wood are all set for eyes down.

**Symptomatic testing**

**A reminder that if anyone in your household has Covid symptoms or we ask that you take your child away for a test this must be a PCR and not a Lateral flow one; this is CWAC Public Health Team stipulation which schools have to follow.**

**Remember to inform school on covid@charlesdarwin.cheshire.sch or 07922949835 of any self-isolation and testing as well as the result. It is really important that you use these contact details to let us know as it is imperative we do not miss any communications.**

**You may find some of the links below useful; please note the first one which can be used to see if you can access financial support if your household is isolating.**

* **Test and Trace** payments of £500 can be made when somebody who is working loses pay because they are told to isolate when they have Covid symptoms or they have been in contact with somebody with symptoms and are told to isolate by test and trace. From 8/3/21 parents who are unable to work from home can also apply if their child is required to isolate and they have caring responsibilities. Visit: [Test and Trace](https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/news-and-views/incidents/coronavirus-covid-19/how-to-get-help/test-and-trace-support-payment.aspx)

* The**Welcome Network** are commissioned by the Council to join up local community food offers. They have produced an interactive map showing where and how local food can be obtained in each area. For full details,  visit: [Interactive map on the Welcome Network website](https://welcomenet.us10.list-manage.com/track/click?u=844a86f0e0dc90bcfc5a5b02f&id=dbdc353820&e=df18df5c07)

* The **Council Tax Reduction Scheme** provides financial support for people who are on a low income and need help to pay their council tax. There is a discretionary fund alongside the main scheme.  Visit: [Council Tax Reduction](https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/council-tax/about-council-tax-reduction/claiming-council-tax-reduction.aspx)

* The **Discretionary Housing Payment scheme** is available to help people who receive Universal Credit or Housing Benefit where the amount awarded in benefits does not pay their full rent.  This scheme can help with the shortfall in some circumstances or can help people on benefits with rent in advance to secure a property.  Visit: [DHP](https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/housing-benefit-council-tax/housing-benefit/discretionary-housing-payments.aspx)

* **Homeless2Housed** is a short term project in 2020/21 to provide support for people who are at risk of losing their home or to secure a property. They can sometimes help with rent arrears and rent in advance. Contact them initially by email on H2H@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

* The **Citizens Advice Bureau** have received £25k from the Winter Grant Scheme fund to cover payments made through their Fuelbank. Phone 0808 2787 806 or apply online for any advice by email  <https://www.citizensadvicecw.org.uk/forms/advice-by-email>

* Holiday Activity and Food provision will also be available over the Easter holiday period, further information can be found on the Edsential website: <https://edsential.com/holidayactivityfund2021/>

Best wishes and thank you for your support

Adam Croft