

12 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We write to express our thanks and gratitude to you all for the support you have shown Croydon Schools during the lockdown period and for the hard work you are doing at home with your children.

The schools have worked hard to ensure that your children have the opportunity to learn at home. We are aware that some of you might be experiencing difficulties with accessing online learning and we are trying to address this. While we recognise this is not the same as being in the classroom we hope your children are enjoying some of the activities. We have certainly enjoyed seeing the responses on social media. At the end of this letter there are some links that you may find useful in relation to this.

We understand the uncertainty and anxieties that surround the next phase of the CV-19 plan but can assure you that the education directorate will support all our schools during the next few weeks and months as we are informed about the next stage of the lockdown.

During this period it is very important that we share concerns with one another – please do not hesitate to contact your schools during this period for additional help and support. The education directorate can be contacted through educationenquiries@croydon.gov.uk during the CV-19 lockdown should you have any concerns but please do speak to your child's school first.

Early on during the COVID-19 pandemic response some parents contacted us about wider matters that were affecting their families, such as adequate access to food, in the context of children not receiving meals at school. In these cases families have been sign-posted to the range of family support options and, if and when appropriate, direct contact has been made with social workers on behalf of parents. Please do make contact if you are experiencing any challenges in relation to access to food and we will link you with the right support. Contact can be made through familysupport@croydon.gov.uk.

We have posted advice and links to information and activity packs for children and young people with special educational needs on the Local Offer website. We hope that you find these helpful. The SEN Service have engaged with some parents through virtual 'Microsoft Teams Meetings'; we hope that parents who have taken part in these meetings have found this helpful. If there are different ways in which parents would like us to have conversations with them, we would be keen to hear feedback about this.

As you may be aware, the government and DfE have made an announcement about the reopening schools and settings for specific year groups within the coming months. We recognise that the uncertainty around any return may be unsettling to children and young people, and we want to acknowledge that and help families prepare for it. Please be assured that the needs of our children and young people with will be considered as part of the return to school. We will be working with schools to help manage this transition with as much notice as possible.

Once again, we would like to thank you for your understanding, commitment and for following government advice to keep us all safe during this period.

Some useful links:

<https://localoffer.croydon.gov.uk/kb5/croydon/directory/home.page>

<https://www.mindheart.co/descargables>

<https://axelscheffler.com/books-for-older-children/coronavirus>

<https://www.learndirect.com/funding-options/free-english-maths>

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/>

<https://www.skillsforlifeforlife.com/article/free-online-functional-skills-courses/5533>

<https://www.ncfe.org.uk/functional-skills>

Best wishes

Yours sincerely



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