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## Headteacher

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Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

### Spring Term 2021 – Headteacher update #4 – Changes to Zoom timings from Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January

End of week #1. I do hope you can enjoy a well-earned rest over weekend.

Thank you for all you are doing with your children at home. I know that this is a really stressful time, especially as you start out and get into a rhythm of working. I know that many of you are also juggling working from home which must be exhausting and tiring. Of course we all want the children to progress in their learning during the lockdown, but if, for your sanity and well-being, you need to put home-lessons on pause for a day or give your children an afternoon of free time then that is fine.

Having completed our first week of Zooms there are a few things to mention:

#### (i) Zoom timings

Our school internet bandwidth is struggling with eight simultaneous Zoom lessons. You and your child may have noticed that the teacher's image freezes regularly during the Zoom lessons (but not during registration). We have tried some behind the scenes solutions but these have not improved matters. Therefore, from Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January we need to reschedule the timings of the Zoom lessons. The registration Zooms will stay at 8.45am for Y5/6 and 9.00am for Y3/4.

Here are the new Zoom timings:

9.15 Y5 & Y6 session 1

9.45 Y3 & Y4 session 1

10.15 Y5 & Y6 session 2

10.45 Y3 & Y4 session 2

11.15 Y5 & Y6 session 3

11.45 Y3 & Y4 session 3

We will not be shortening the Zooms. They will stay at between 40 and 45 minutes long. This does mean that during the overlap period the quality of video image from school will decrease.



### **(ii) Zoom names**

Please remind your child to change the Zoom name to their own name. This is a safeguarding measure. It means that we know who we are admitting to the Zooms. If we see a Zoom name such as 'Mr McTavish' or 'Sparkly Unicorns are Cool' we won't be able to admit the user as we won't know who they are. Thank you.

### **(iii) Eating in Zooms**

The Zoom lessons are lessons. Some children have been eating during the Zooms. Please ensure that your child has a snack before or after the lesson if they are peckish. If nothing else it makes everyone else in the Zoom feel hungry.

### **(iv) Assemblies**

During the previous school closure we did not share any assemblies. This time we are planning to do, hopefully at least three per week. We think that these will be accessed via an Assembly page on the VLE, but we are still trying to work it out. Watch this space.

### **ELSA Resources**

As the amount of time away from school increases, we are aware that some children may struggle with their feelings around the virus and its impact on their lives. The Surrey Educational Psychology Service have recommended a book, Coronavirus by Axel Scheffler, which can be accessed by the following web link: <https://axelscheffler.com/books-for-older-children/coronavirus>. This might be a helpful way for you as parents to talk to children and allow them to ask questions.

### **Hardship**

We are very aware of the negative impact this shut down will be having on families in many ways, especially financially. Those families who meet the threshold to receive 'free school meals' due to their income, benefits etc. are receiving some extra support. If you are experiencing hardship but didn't previously qualify for 'free school meals' do get in touch as we may be able to arrange some support for you, or you may now qualify for entitlement to 'free school meals' support.

Please remember that If you have a Safeguarding concern around any child please contact us or Surrey Children's Services: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/childrens-social-care/contact-childrens-services> or phone 0300 470 9100.

It has been a real delight seeing children walking in and out of school today collecting their bits from their classrooms. A small reminder of all that we are missing.

Take care

Kind regards



Richard Catchpole (Headteacher)

