



# Heather Herald

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Issue 7 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Four weeks of home learning is behind us and half term is on the horizon. I know you might not feel like it at times, but you are all doing an amazing job. Whatever your personal circumstances, we know you are all doing the best that you can. Some of you are worried as your children may be not completing all that is set, that you feel you are keeping on top of the English and the Maths after the live session with the teacher, but not completing the afternoon tasks all day – that is fine. We totally understand that time in some households is limited especially when trying to work from home as well. Some families are then doing some activities at the weekend, which is also fine if you are all keen to do it as that is when you have the time. My own children are at a stage in their learning where they are managing the majority of the learning themselves, to be honest if they were primary age, I certainly would be struggling to manage their learning as well a juggling my own job – my hat goes off to you all, we all really appreciate your efforts and I am sure despite their grumbling, your children do too.

Last week the government told us that we will know more what is happening regarding schooling from the 8<sup>th</sup> March. Until then, we are to continue as we are. With this in mind, we have put together a short questionnaire regarding the online learning offered so far so we can make tweaks if needed to try and improve the learning experience for all. I am fully aware that we are not going to be able to ensure that everyone is happy but staff will work together looking at your suggestions to see what we can take on board. You will find the questionnaire [here](#), please complete by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February to allow us to review our remote learning offer next week before all of us in school, and you at home have a well-earned rest over half term.

One thing we would like to happen going forward is that we would like where ever possible to have cameras turned on – it is easy to anonymise your background so we can't all see the pile of washing that is on the chair, or maybe that is just my house! Staff really enjoy seeing the children's faces and it is definitely beneficial from a well-being point of view to have regular visual contact between children and teachers. Staff are now also able to change the settings on their laptop so they can see all children in the meeting. Miss Barton and I tried this on Friday with the children in Obama and felt that the children also benefitted from seeing each other. It is also a good way for teachers to assess engagement and adapt the session as necessary; we can also give them a polite prompt if they don't seem to be listening! At the beginning of the session, your child will be asked to have their camera on and we would be grateful if it could stay on for the rest of the session. We have 99% of our families with access to a camera, well as far as we know, if you are unable to access a web camera, please let us know and we will see if we can help.

If your child is unwell, please let us know via WEDUC or by phoning the School Office like you would if they were normally absent from school. If they are unable to attend a session, it would be great if you could let us know beforehand too. Registers of the sessions are being downloaded from TEAMS.

It is great to see how confident the children are with the technology, probably better than us adults most of the time. They are generally using the chat as they would ask and answer questions in school and the use of gifs are now few and far between thank you to those families who we have contacted about this for your support.

If you require reading books or new exercise books to record work in, these can be collected from the office.

As half term approaches, we will be saying goodbye for a good few months to Mrs Clarkson as she prepares for the safe delivery of baby Clarkson some time in March. We wish Mr and Mrs Clarkson all the very best during this very exciting time and we can't wait to meet the new little one, albeit remotely.

As Mrs Clarkson leaves for her maternity leave, we will be getting ready to welcome back Mrs Smith from her maternity leave - I think we must have a magic chair somewhere in school which I am actively avoiding 😊!

Mrs Smith will be returning after half term to work with children in Donaldson and Rowling class teaching children working both at home and in school. Mrs Smith will be joining Mrs Clarkson for the parents' evening session next week. This means that all the parents of children in Donaldson class will have an opportunity to meet Mrs Smith, as our plan is that Mrs Smith will be Donaldson's class full time teacher whenever things are to return to 'normal' - however I am learning not to plan too far ahead as things can change with very little notice! Mrs Smith has also joined us in school last week and this week for a few sessions to get to know everyone.

As I said at the beginning of the letter, you are all doing a brilliant job. We may only have a few children in school but we are still here for all of our families. If you need support, a friendly ear, someone to have a good cry or a general moan with, you know where we are.

Take care and stay safe.

Much Love,

Maxine Michalowski and all the staff at Heather School

### Key Dates

School closes for half term Friday 12th February 2021

Half term Break

Monday 15th to Friday 19th February 2021

School opens to pupils Monday 22nd February 2021

School closes Friday 26th March 2021

Easter Break

Monday 29th March to Friday 9th April 2021

Summer Term 2021

School opens Monday 12th April 2021

May Day Bank Holiday Monday 3rd May 2021

~~KS 1 Sats take place throughout May\* Canceled~~

~~KS 2 Sats Monday 10<sup>th</sup> - Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May\* Canceled~~

School closes for half term Friday 28th May 2021

Half term Break

Monday 31st May - Friday 4th June 2021

~~Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June Year 1 Phonics Screen take place this week Canceled\*~~

~~Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June - 25<sup>th</sup> June - Year 4 Multiplication Check\* Canceled\*~~

School Open for Pupils Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2021

School closes for Pupil for the summer break Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July