

Dear Parents and Carers,

I normally use the final newsletter of the year to summarise the main events and achievements in school over the past three terms. Unfortunately, there has been very little that has been normal for any of us since the full extent and impact of the COVID-19 virus became apparent in early March of this year.

Indeed, there will be very few people in our community who have ever experienced such a rapid and fundamental change to their accepted way of life on the scale we have seen. The implications of the virus in terms of our school have obviously been unprecedented, and there is no question that the situation has negatively affected everyone in our school community, most notably our children who have had their education disrupted. It is, of course, not just their access to teachers and the formal learning that takes place, it is also the social interactions with friends, the sporting opportunities, the chance to perform in the school play and the rites of passage events such as the leavers' service. We are also very aware that the implications have been even more serious for our families, with ongoing concerns about the health of family members, uncertainty about continued employment and financial worries.

Despite the difficulties of the past few months however, there has been a great deal to celebrate both from a school and a community perspective, and whilst none of us would have chosen to find ourselves in the situation in which we have been placed, I have been reminded of, and astonished by, the capacity that the human race has to adapt to change, and to show astonishing resolve and creativity in the process.

On a school level, these characteristics have been evident in the way that our children, parents and staff adapted to the home-school learning expectations and routines. It is remarkable how efficiently the new normal was established, and how quickly everyone made the absolute best of a unique and difficult set of circumstances.

From a school leadership perspective, I am extremely grateful to all of our staff for the work they have done to keep the school open for the children of Key Workers since the lockdown began in March, as well as their dedication and determination in making the Home-School learning provision as successful and enjoyable for our families as possible. I am delighted that our Year 6 children have had the opportunity to spend the final part of their last term at Alverton in school with their friends, and that we were able to welcome the Reception children back at the end of June. My thanks go to all of the staff for their unwavering professionalism and hard work in making all of this possible.

I am also immensely grateful to you as parents for the support that you have shown our school both in terms of the Home-Learning partnership, and also in supporting some of the more difficult decisions we have had to make with regard to school re-opening. These have been challenging times but I am satisfied that the decisions we took put the safety of the children, staff and families first and reflected the views of the majority of our parents.

We have spent much of the past few weeks looking at ways to implement the new DfE expectations on school re-opening for all our children in September. These have been set out in the documentation sent out to parents this week. I would urge you to read these new arrangements carefully over the holiday period and familiarise yourself with the changes. Perhaps most notably children will be in Phase Bubbles (e.g. Key Stage 1 Bubble, etc.) and these will be strictly adhered to.

Please ensure that you know when and where you will need to drop off and collect children each day as part of the new staggered timings and drop off points. This is set out in the Return to School document and in a letter from your child's new class teacher which will be sent to you next week. Please also note that parents will not be allowed in the school at all from September. We will review these arrangements regularly and will ease these restrictions as soon as it is safe to do so.

We will be focusing on a recovery curriculum from September in order to help children make up the ground lost over the past few months. This will be based on individual assessments at the start of term, and I would urge you to spend a little time each day continuing to support your child by hearing them read, and working on basic maths (times tables) if at all possible as this will make a huge difference to their starting points in September.

Thank you again for your continued support, and I hope that you all have a safe and enjoyable break over the Summer period.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Higgs

The Summer term ends for all children on **Tuesday 21st July at normal time.**  
The Autumn term begins on **Thursday 3rd September.**

### **Staffing Update**

At this time of year we have to say goodbye to some of our friends on the staff. Mrs Sibley is leaving us and we wish her all the very best for the future. Miss McClure is also leaving but we look forward to seeing her again next term as she will be doing her teacher training placement in the Nursery. We are also delighted to welcome back Mrs Hanley who will be teaching in Puffins on Thursday afternoons and Fridays.

### **School lunches from September**

Please note that the price of a school meal from September will be **£2.40** for all children from Year 3-6 unless they are eligible for a free school meal. Please pay by putting cash or cheque (payable to 'Caterlink') in a named envelope and give it to your child or put in the post box on the wall next to the main door at the front of the school.

### **Menu**

The current menu will run until October half term and is available to view on the school website under Parent Pages, What's On this term. All children will be given a paper copy when we come back in September.

### **Breakfast club from September**

As mentioned in the Parent Pack for September, Breakfast club will run from **Monday 14th September** and will need to be pre-booked as places are limited. If you would like to book your child in, please complete the form attached and email it to [secretary@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:secretary@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk) asap. We will allocate places on a first come, first served basis and will be unable to admit children who are not booked in. The cost will be £2.50 per day per child (£1.50 for siblings).

### **Remember – safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**

If you have a safeguarding concern, please contact Martin Higgs (Designated Safeguarding Lead) at [head@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:head@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk) or, if it is out of school hours, please contact the Multi Agency Referral Agency on 0300 1231 116;  
E-mail: [multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk)



*Introducing...*

*Alverton Woodland Nursery's Outdoor Adventure  
Summer Holiday Club:*

*'The Woodland Adventurers!'*

*For anymore information or to read our 'Adventurers Guide' please contact the setting.*

**Tel: 01736 351135**

**Email: woodland\_nursery@yahoo.com**

### Outstanding debts

Please ensure that all money owing is paid by **Tuesday 21st July** so that our finance systems can be closed down for this school year. This includes outstanding debts for swimming, breakfast club, trips, and nursery sessions. **Please check your school money account which will tell you if anything remains to be paid.** If you cannot get onto your account, please contact the office who will help you or let you know if anything is owing.

If you think you owe for school lunches, please contact the office and we will let you know how much is outstanding and how to pay.



**NATIONAL DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE HELPLINE  
0808 2000 247  
24/7 CONFIDENTIAL  
FREEPHONE**

**WCWAid**

**West Cornwall Women's Aid**

**01736 367539**

<https://www.wcwaaid.co.uk/helpline>







## Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

The Trust has its own Out of Hours telephone support provided by Support Matters Cornwall. This service operates from 5pm to 9am on weekdays and 24 hours a day at weekends and bank holidays. The service is open to all patients (aged 16+) under the care of the Trust's mental health services. Support can be delivered over the telephone, via text, email or web chat. Call free on **0800 001 4330**.

This is an unusual time and we are conscious that some people and families will be finding it difficult. We have included some helpline numbers on this page in case anyone finds them useful.



### Penzance CTIPA Foodbank

The CTIPA Foodbank in Penzance has let us know that it is no longer necessary to obtain a voucher to receive food from them and that they are open every day at the moment. If their support would be helpful to you at this time, just phone Vryan or Adele in the office in confidence on 01736 364087 and they can phone the Foodbank for you who will be able to help.

The Foodbank are extremely busy at the moment and are very grateful for any donations.

Download this image onto your phone for **when you might need help**

**Samaritans:** 24h  
Emotional support to anyone in distress, struggling to cope, or at risk of suicide.  
**116 123**

**Shout:** 24h  
Text service, free on all major networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere.  
• If you're over 18, text the word **SHOUT**  
• Under 18s, text **YM**  
**Text: 85258**

**Cornwall's 24/7 NHS mental health support** 24h  
Call for free, any time day or night if you are worried about your own or someone else's mental health. The team behind the 24/7 open access telephone service will listen to you and determine how best to help.  
**0800 038 5300**

**Valued Lives:**  
Supports people who are experiencing mental or emotional distress in Cornwall. Every day, 5.30pm - midnight.  
**01209 901438**

If you, or someone else, is in immediate danger call **999**

[www.cornwall.gov.uk/mentalhealth](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/mentalhealth)



**SafeToNet** is an app for parents to help them safeguard their children from online risks like cyberbullying and sexting, whilst respecting their child's rights to privacy.

# Online Safety

The BBC have a website and app called **Own It**. The website has a lot of content for children to help them navigate their online lives, and the free smartphone app comes with a special keyboard which can intervene with help and support in the moments that children need it the most.

Whilst there are huge benefits to being online in order to stay connected to family and friends, many parents may feel concerned about the activities and content their children are accessing. This guidance outlines resources to help keep children safe from different risks online and where to go to receive support and advice. This information is updated as needed (it's recently added new information on apps) so it's worth another look.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online>

At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.







## Conversation starters for parents and carers: ONLINE CONTENT

Trying to start a conversation about online safety with children can be a daunting task. There are many reasons why children may not want to talk to adults about it. One might be that they don't think you'll understand or that you won't know how to help if they came to you with an online problem. It can also be hard to start a conversation about something that you might have limited knowledge about. However, with screen time increasing during the lockdown, it's important now more than ever, to be talking to children about what they are accessing online.

- ### 1 ASK THEIR MOTIVATION

Sometimes it's easy to assume we know why children choose certain games or apps. It can seem obvious, like the child interested in football will be enthusiastic about the new FIFA game. But sometimes it can be more subtle than that. It could be that it's an outlet for their creativity or it might be that they like the look of the main character. Learning their motivation and knowing why they like it can help advising them on how to use it safely and help you discuss the pros and cons.
- ### 2 CULTIVATE A BLAME FREE CULTURE

Children can often blame themselves if they come across something that scares them or makes them feel uncomfortable. There will be times when your child has gone against something that you have forbidden, however, most children do not intend to put themselves at risk. Therefore, it's important that your child is able to come to you with a problem and won't be blamed for it. Try to understand what happened and why and warn them of the dangers once more. Engaging in a 'told you so' dialogue or suggesting they are in trouble for not listening may deter them from reporting any future concerns.
- ### 3 SHARE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Starting a conversation by sharing something that you've seen or that has made you feel uncomfortable can be a great opener. Talking about your own feelings can help children realise that it isn't just them – adults can be affected too. You can then go into how you coped with it therefore indirectly giving children advice on how they can also cope in uncomfortable situations. You can also explain that the reason that you've chosen to talk to them about it is because talking helps. Children will hopefully be able to see the parallels in the experiences and mimic your behaviour in future.
- ### 4 TALK ABOUT THE NEWS

Asking children what their response is to news stories around online safety can be revealing. For example, there has been a recent survey conducted by the BBFC who are currently campaigning for the application of age ratings and content warnings on video sharing platforms. What do they think about this? Can they think of a time when this would have helped themselves or someone they know? Are they against the idea? If so, why? Could they be accessing something they shouldn't be?
- ### 5 ASK FOR ADVICE

It could be that you really do have a friend at work who is debating whether or not to let their child do something online, or it could be that you're bending the truth slightly, but hopefully the outcome would be the same. Don't be afraid to ask others for advice. Not only why they should let the child use it, but also what would they tell the child to be aware of. What are the risks? This will help you understand the risks yourself and what to look out for in future.
- ### 6 MAKE TIME TO LISTEN

When your child can't wait to tell you about their new game, always try and listen to what they say. We always have a lot on our minds, so it's easy for us to drift off onto other things which may be more important. However, try to stay involved and ask them more details about aspects of the game/app. Children will appreciate your interest and the more questions you ask, the more you can find out. If you act uninterested, then they are less likely to tell you about it again in the future.
- ### 7 ASK THEM TO BE THE TEACHER

Showing an interest in what children are accessing online is a great opportunity for you to learn something new as well. Children on the whole love sharing their experiences so by asking them to teach you how to use an app or play a game is not only a great way to bond, but you will also feel more empowered to talk about it. It is easy to shy away from conversations when the child perhaps knows more about the subject content than you do. This can help to turn this around.
- ### 8 USE SCHOOL MESSAGING

It might be that your child's school has sent out a message about the Childline number or to remind children to use the CEOP button to report content. Ask the children what they learned about these at school. When would they use the Childline number? When would they need to use the CEOP button? What does it look like? Asking the children why the school thought that the information was so important that they sent out a message about it reinforces what they learnt whilst at school.
- ### 9 ASK ABOUT THE RISKS

Many children may know what online risks are and will happily explain the potential dangers. Listen and try not to be overly shocked if they tell you something that disturbs you. This can then lead nicely into you asking the question about what steps they are taking to look after themselves or what help they could seek if something goes wrong. Sometimes it's just nice to know that your children know the dangers and have taken steps to help reduce the risk for themselves – this is the ultimate goal.
- ### 10 ASK ABOUT RESPONSIBILITIES

Try asking open ended questions about roles and responsibilities online. Who is in control of the internet? Who is looking after you whilst you are online? Who decides what is appropriate for children to see? This can reveal a lot about a child's perception about who is responsible for their online safety. If they believe that it is up to everyone else to keep them safe, then you know you need to have a conversation about how they can reduce their own risk.
- ### 11 ASK ABOUT SCHOOL ADVICE

Sometimes it's hard to know what to warn children about. If there is a new app or game that your child has come across recently, ask them what they think their teacher would say about it. What advice would school give them? What have they been told about trusting people online or about fake news? Finding this out would be a good way to hear what advice they were given at school and help you reiterate the same message. Quick reminders about what to do if something makes them feel uncomfortable or who their trusted adults are can make all the difference.

## Meet our expert

Heather Cardwell is a practising Online Safety Lead and senior school leader who is passionate about safeguarding children online and educating them around online risks. She has over 10+ years as a Computing Lead and has successfully developed and implemented a whole school approach to online safety in schools, delivering online safety training to both school staff and parents and helping to roll-out a bespoke online safety policy across her local network of education settings.





## Daisy's diary

Staff have been working hard to ensure the school is sparkling clean for September, and really tidy and clear. Outside however, things have gone bonkers. Our groundsman and his team have stopped the school being completely grown over but its still looking a bit unloved in some places. I think being outside in September where we can and having it looking as welcoming as possible for the children is important but I'm not going to be able to do as much as I'd like. So I'm asking for help!

### Summer Sort Out Days

Will run from 10am - 2pm on the school grounds.

We'll blast a different area each day. I'll bring some food and provide lots of cold drinks. We might even be able to get some music on! You don't have to lug things around if you don't want to, there will be a range of different things to do.

Making an outside music area in the woods

Finishing the twig and branch hedge to line the path

Sorting the wildlife garden - cutting the path and tending the trees and putting our beautiful ceramic bees back!

Setting up quiet reading areas

Finding the school garden patches (they are under there somewhere...)

Please consider helping - we are so lucky to have such an amazing outside space at Alverton and it really makes a difference to the children's wellbeing.

If you are interested the easiest thing to do is to email me on my school email

[dwright@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:dwright@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk)

I'll let you know what's happening on which dates and book people in so I can make sure we have enough of everything on site to make us all Covid safe.

Thank you very much!

Daisy  
Outdoor learning leader



## Free School Meals

At this time, many families may find themselves eligible for Free School Meals and Pupil Premium who previously did not meet the criteria. Please read this page carefully to find out if you are now eligible. Our Pupil Premium Parent Guide is being sent home alongside today's newsletter to provide you with more information.

Cornwall Council are continuing to process new applications for Free School Meals. **Please ensure that you read the eligibility criteria before applying** and complete the online application form if you are eligible.

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-colleges/school-meals/application-for-free-school-meals-and-pupil-premium/>

Postal applications are currently not being accepted but, if you are unable to apply online, you can call the Free School Meals team on 01872 323298 and a member of the team will call you back to complete the application over the phone. Please make sure that your phone will accept calls from a private number.

*NB All Key Stage 1 (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) pupils are entitled to receive a free school meal as part of the Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) initiative, regardless of what benefits are being claimed. Whilst schools are closed to most pupils during the current Covid-19 pandemic, schools are not required to provide meals or vouchers to Key Stage 1 children who usually receive free meals under the Universal Infant Free School Meals scheme but are not currently attending school.*

**However, some children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and receiving Universal Infant Free School Meals (as well as all Key Stage 2 children) may have an underlying entitlement to benefits-related Free School Meals. Schools will make arrangements for these children to receive free meals through food parcels or supermarket vouchers.**

Your child may be eligible for benefits-related free school meals if you, or the child themselves in their own right, receives any of the following benefits:

- Income Support (IS)
- Job Seekers' Allowance (Income-Based) and equal based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA-IR) and equal based Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (CTC) with an annual income of less than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Guarantee Element of Pension Credit (GPC)
- Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (IAA) Support
- Universal Credit - Your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get) as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods

If you are claiming the benefits listed below you are **NOT** eligible for free school meals, regardless of what other benefits/credits are being claimed:

- Working Tax Credit
- Contribution-Based Job Seeker's Allowance and/or Contribution-Based Employment and Support Allowance

However, you will be temporarily eligible to claim free school meals if you receive a **Working Tax Credit run-on**, which is the payment you may receive for a further four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

**If you think that your child is eligible for Free School Meals, we strongly recommend that you contact Cornwall Council as detailed above.**