



29/1/21

FRIDAY NEWS

Nº 18

School Covid-19 Lockdown Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are now at the end of our fourth week of home-schooling following the Prime Minister's announcement to begin a period of lockdown on January 4th.

We continue to be open each day for children of Key Workers and I am grateful to all of our staff who help to ensure that this provision is maintained, whilst also balancing this with the daily home-learning offer. We would again remind parents that this Key Worker provision is a **last resort offer** to enable critical workers to continue in their roles. This is really important in order to protect the health of unvaccinated staff operating with little or no PPE, and of course the wider school community.

We have been really pleased with the extent to which our families across the school have engaged with the home-learning provision which Alverton has offered and the feedback from parents has been extremely positive regarding the developments and innovations which have been introduced by the school since the first lockdown in 2020.

We currently have 92% of children regularly engaging with home-learning across the school as a whole which is a big increase compared with last year. As a school, we are pleased to have been able to supply iPads to all children in Years 3 to 6, as well as to any children that require a device in Years 1 and 2. Removing the barrier of being unable to access to a device, or having to share access with a sibling etc., has certainly helped to keep children focused.

In addition, I know that our teachers are working very hard to make sure that they are available each day between 9am and 1pm in order to respond to work and questions from children (and parents) in their class, and the use of Zoom and Showbie plus a range of online teaching methods has been really well-received by parents and children across the school.

Thank you to all our parents and carers who have been working so hard to keep the children on track with the home learning offer. We know that this can be challenging for you and are grateful for all that you are doing to ensure that your children do not fall behind in their learning during this extended period away from school.

Of course, the longer this period of lockdown continues, the harder it can become to maintain enthusiasm and engagement with home-learning. It is inevitable that there will be a certain amount of home-learning fatigue creeping in for children and parents - the same is true for the teachers! I know that we would all greatly prefer to be back in school.

There has been a lot written in the media about the detrimental impact on children of missing so much school as a result of the lockdown periods. There is no doubt a great deal of truth in these concerns from an emotional, social and educational perspective.

My own opinion is that we can significantly reduce the educational impact of lockdown if children continue to engage with home learning, particularly in the core areas of reading, writing and maths. This means children having to focus on these core areas for relatively short periods of time each day, with parents insisting that this is the case and using teachers to provide the professional support needed. I see this as no less as important a habit or routine to establish and maintain as that of ensuring that teeth are brushed and particular bed-times adhered to. I also believe that there are mental health and wellbeing benefits for children in maintaining these home-learning routines and sustaining a link with learning habits, their teacher and school life as a whole.

This difficult period will pass, and at some point we will look back on this part of our lives as living through a unique period in history. Our children are resilient; they will adapt and accept changes in lifestyle that we as adults often struggle with. What they will find much harder to recover is the ground lost in terms of their learning if they do not continue to work on their core skills now. Children only get one chance of being in each year group at primary school, they cannot repeat a year. **It is therefore so important that we maintain the home-learning routines and at the very least continue to focus on developing core skills in reading, writing and maths.**

Thank you again for the work you are doing with your children and the support you are showing for our staff and the school as a whole.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Higgs
Headteacher

February half term - 15th-19th February

The Department for Education have confirmed that schools will be closed as usual over the February half term holiday and are not expected to remain open to key worker or vulnerable children.

Weekly Wellbeing!



The Five Ways to Wellbeing

We have spent a lot of time in school talking about the Five Ways to Wellbeing with the children and how they can have a positive impact on our mental health and wellbeing. We all think about looking after our physical health but looking after our mental health is just as important. There has been a lot of research by professionals who have identified five simple things that we can do which can help everyone, not just those struggling with their mental health.

At the moment, it is more important than ever to build our resilience and boost our wellbeing. Why not follow this link to look at the presentation Mrs Clemens has made which introduces the Five Ways to Wellbeing. Each week, we will feature one of them in the Friday News and your child's teacher will tell you more ways that you can all get involved.

<http://www.alverton.org.uk> and click on the Home School Learning tab and then Five Ways to Wellbeing.

The Big Garden Birdwatch!

This is taking place from 29—31 January but it doesn't seem to be too late to sign up! Just take an hour to count all the birds you can see in your garden using the handy downloadable guide to help you identify them. Even if you don't sign up, there are lots of lovely activities under the Fun and Learning tab. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/>



Feel Fabulous in February!

We are aware that additional outside pressures caused by the Covid-19 pandemic can impact on our anxiety levels and mental wellbeing and the staff are finding ways to try and support each other and have fun!

To this end, we are taking part in the Feel Fabulous in February challenge created by Mrs Dennison. This is a 28-day challenge to try something new, make some healthier choices, do some exercise or just relax! Please join us if you'd like to!



Feel Fabulous in February!

Want to get a little fitter, feel more fabulous and have a little fun this February?
Tick off one of these boxes every day to complete the challenge!



Drink 2 litres of water.	Do something which makes you happy.	Self-care Sunday! Have a bath, put on a face mask, listen to music.	Go for a 30 minute walk.	Do something nice for someone else.
Have a screen free day.	Read a book or a magazine.	Try an alternative drink to tea or coffee	Have a meat free day once a week (meat free Monday!)	Do an online exercise class.
Learn something new- a fact, a language, an instrument.	Eat at least 3 pieces of fruit.	Get at least 8 hours sleep.	Ring a friend and ask them how they are.	Write a card or letter to someone.
Tidy something up- declutter something in your house.	Go out into the garden- have a look around and see if you can notice any signs of spring.	Draw or colour something in.	Dance like no-one is watching to a favourite song!	Try out a new, healthy recipe.
Cycle, walk or run for an hour.	Watch a sunrise or a sunset.	Complete a puzzle- crossword, jigsaw or word-search.	Find a special place in your local area. Visit it and observe what's happening.	Go sugar free for a day.
Go to the beach and listen to the waves.	Eat 5 different vegetables.	Find a new band, genre or song to listen to.		

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 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

Coronavirus symptoms

The main symptoms are:

A high temperature (hot to the touch on chest or back)

OR

A new, continuous cough (coughing a lot for more than an hour or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours)

OR

A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste (you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything or things smell or taste different to normal)

If you or your child have any **ONE** or more of these you must get a COVID-19 test as soon as possible and stay at home and do not have visitors— only leave home to get the test. Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, must also stay at home until you get your result. **Please ring or email the school office as soon as possible to let us know if your child is currently attending school.**

You can book at test online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or phone the NHS test line 119.

Borrowbox

This is a fantastic free e-book and audio book scheme from the library. Please see the flyer attached with all the information and contact your child's class teacher for log in details. You can also use your child's existing library card if they are already a user.

Contacting School

Please be aware that whilst school remains open for some children, there will be no admittance to the building or grounds for any parents, visitors or children not currently at school. If you need to contact us, please do so by email (secretary@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk) or by calling the office between **9am- 1pm**, Monday to Friday on 01736 364087.

Hello...I'm still here...

Hi everyone, just a quick message to make sure everyone is as good as can be expected and to remind you that, should you want anything, then I'm still here, in some form. It seems ever such a long time ago that I was able to offer this service actually in person, invite you into school, make us a cuppa, find us a biscuit and then find a quiet place to listen to anything that was on your mind. And almost a year ago everything changed to the point that now all I can offer is a chat on the phone. But I do still want you to know that the offer is still there and perhaps it's needed more than ever now? If, like me, Christmas offered an opportunity to pretend it wasn't happening to some extent and have a lovely time with those closest to us, then you may be feeling a lot of unhappy thoughts right now. It certainly feels to me that I have been catapulted right back to the first lockdown, although it's more severe and, for me, feeling more scary than ever. However, I'm trying to be brave and find the best in every small thing. Well, that's all for now. But I am still here and I did want to remind you all of this. In the meantime, take care, stay safe, look after yourselves and I hope to be back soon, with real tea, real biscuits and me, live.

My very best wishes to us all, Mrs D xxx



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**.



Family
Line

0808 802 6666



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

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

NSPCC

Help for children worried about COVID

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health/depression-anxiety-mental-health>

Penzance CTIPA Foodbank

The CTIPA Foodbank in Penzance provides food for anyone in need. If their support would be helpful to you, 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.

ON YOUR SIDE NO MATTER WHAT

☎ **0800 58 58 58** 🌐 THECALMZONE.NET/WEBCHAT

5PM-MIDNIGHT | FREE | CONFIDENTIAL | ANONYMOUS

CAMPAIGN
AGAINST
LIVING
MISERABLY
CALM

citizens
advice

0344 411 1444

"It's alright to ask for help"

SAMARITANS

☎ **116 123**

COVID-19 isolation may cause tensions to rise and domestic abuse to increase. Help is available.

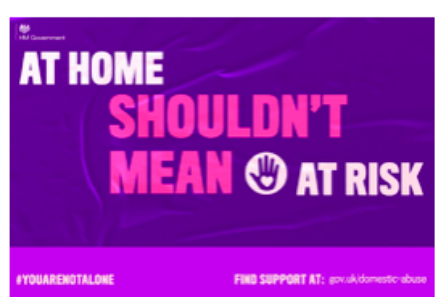


NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE
0808 2000 247
24/7 CONFIDENTIAL FREEPHONE

WCWAid

West Cornwall Women's Aid
01736 367539

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



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 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 for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

Hello, Sign in or register
Daily Deals
Brand Outlet
Help & Contact
Sell
Watch List
My eBay

What Parents & Carers Need to Know About

eBay is the world's biggest online auction platform: a digital emporium where you can buy practically anything, new or used. Although eBay has made huge strides with protecting buyers in recent years, there are still dangers to be mindful of: particularly when it comes to children using the site. Here's how to minimise the risks.

Shop by category
All Categories
Search
Advanced

It's not for Children

Although many items on the site – toys, video games, DVDs, etc – will appeal to them, it isn't intended for children. eBay's policy does state that "a person under 18 can use an adult's account with the permission of the account holder" – but note the next line: "the account holder is responsible for everything done with that account". So you could be liable for bids made on your account, which might result in unexpected bills or an account suspension. Think carefully before letting an under 18 loose on eBay.

Counterfeit/Illegal Items

Despite tightening restrictions, eBay is still rife with counterfeit, unlicensed or illegal items. It's not uncommon, for example, to find cheap internet TV boxes for sale that promise access to premium sports and movie channels, often using illegal streams. Some listings are deliberately misleading. You might, for instance, find an Xbox box shown – but literally all they are selling is the box the console came in. However, a child might see an Xbox selling for £100 and make a bid, thinking they're getting a bargain.

Overspending

It's easy enough for adults to get drawn into eBay bidding wars – and find themselves paying more for an item than they can really afford. For children, who often aren't aware of the financial consequences of their actions, that temptation could be even stronger. Allowing children to bid on eBay auctions is fraught with risk.

Off-site Communication

Rogue eBay sellers may try and get buyers to contact them away from the site, to avoid paying eBay fees. Any transactions conducted off the site, however, don't offer the protection that you get on eBay itself (in terms of feedback, returns and refunds). Off-site trading can often involve swapping mobile phone numbers or email addresses, which poses obvious risks if a child is using the site.

Advice for Parents & Carers

Visit the Safety Centre

eBay's Safety Centre (pages.ebay.co.uk/safetycentre) publishes good advice on how to avoid scams. Pay particular attention to the guidance on 'second chance offer' emails, which often arrive when you've just missed out on an item. Again, children who desperately want a product are more susceptible to such tricks and could inadvertently infect the computer with malware or hand over personal details to fraudsters.

Use Two-Factor Sign-in

eBay has a security facility that requests confirmation from the eBay mobile app when you sign in. That way, even if your child (or someone else) knows your password, they won't get access to your account. Install the eBay app on your smartphone, then on the computer click the 'Hello, [your name]' link at the top of the screen. Select 'Account Settings', then 'Sign-In and Security'.

Adjust Content Filters

If you don't use eBay, you can block it using the filters provided by all leading internet providers. Instructions on how to implement these filters vary, but all will offer the facility to block certain sites to any user on the Wi-Fi network. These filters aren't foolproof, however: they won't stop access if your child visits eBay using 3G/4G mobile data on their phone.

Secure Your Account

Remove temptation and don't leave your signed-in account accessible on a family computer. Ideally, give your children separate accounts on the computer so you're not sharing the same web browser and apps. Alternatively, ensure you log out after an eBay session, so it's not possible for your child to make bids or sell items using your account. You're left logged in by default, so make sure you click on the 'Hello, [your name]' link in the top left of the screen and sign out.

Meet our Expert

Barry Collins has been a technology journalist and editor for more than 20 years, working for titles such as the *Sunday Times*, *Which?*, *PC Pro* and *Computeractive*. He's appeared regularly as a technology pundit on television and radio, including on BBC *Newsnight*, Radio 5 Live and ITV *News at Ten*. He has two children and has writes regularly about internet safety issues.

www.nationalonlinesafety.com
[@natonsafety](https://twitter.com/natonsafety)
[/NationalOnlineSafety](https://facebook.com/NationalOnlineSafety)
[@nationalonlinesafety](https://instagram.com/nationalonlinesafety)

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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.

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 / withheld number.

NB All 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.

However, some children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 may also have an underlying entitlement to benefits-related Free School Meals. Please ensure that you check this and apply if appropriate, even if your child is in one of these year groups, because of the additional benefits (eg food vouchers during holiday times where these are given by the Government).

Your child may be eligible for benefits-related free school meals if their parent / carer (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.