



Brindishe Lee Newsletter

Friday 8th January 2021

Headteacher: Ms Maxine Sebire



Dear parents, carers, governors, staff and friends,

This is our first whole school newsletter of 2021, and we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year! Although this is not how any of us would have wanted to start the year, and the future seems uncertain for everyone, we feel we have much to be grateful for and celebrate.

Many thanks for your patience, understanding and support with the rapidly changing situation in schools.

I know staff at school have really appreciated the kind and positive messages over the last week from many of the Brindishe Lee community. Supporting pupils and families throughout this uncertain period and ensuring that we provide the best possible education to all our young people remains our number one priority.

As you are aware, our school is remaining open to support vulnerable children and children of critical key workers only, whose role is essential to the Covid-19 response. You will have received a letter at the weekend for you to request a place in school for your child if you are a critical key worker and I would like to thank parents and carers for their prompt replies and understanding with this matter. Further updates regarding critical key worker places is listed below.

For the children not attending school, remote learning is up and running offering quality online provision. Vulnerable children and children of critical workers attending school will receive the same learning as the children accessing the learning at home. I would like to thank you in advance for helping and supporting your children's learning during this time.

We know this is not an ideal situation and like you, would much prefer having children at school learning alongside their friends and staff at Brindishe Lee. However, this is a necessary step to help suppress the spread of Covid-19 and if we all play our part in doing this, the sooner all children will be able to return to our school.

All we can ask for is your continued support and understanding at this time. We will be in regular contact with you all to keep you updated and informed. In the meantime, please stay safe and well.

Kind regards,

Ms Sebire and the Brindishe Lee Team.

Critical/Key Worker Schooling Update

During this week we have had an increasing number of families asking for their child/ren to attend school rather than remain at home. After the initial announcement, following advice from the local authority, we offered places to households that had two critical workers or were classed as vulnerable according to the criteria set out by the Government. This is to keep the school as safe as possible for everyone, by providing for those who were in real need the care provided in school.

We are aware that the Government has advised that only one parent/carer has to be a key worker, but until we knew what the uptake would be for Keyworkers, and had offered spaces to all our vulnerable children, we have needed to remain with our initial criteria. We appreciate that it is not easy to balance working from home and supporting children's learning, but safety must come first and our aim has to be keeping the size of bubbles manageable so that Critical Worker provision can remain open as for long as possible.

We want to work with all our families, therefore applications to school can be made if there is just one critical worker at home and if you feel you really need to use the provision. At present you will be placed on a waiting list and proof of your employment will be required. Please note that any applications made will be reviewed at the end of next week. If safe to do so, we will allocate children on a needs basis, to start during the week beginning the 18th January 2021. The school will be in contact with you closer to the time if we are able to offer you a place. Please email info@brindishelee.jewisham.sch.uk to request to be placed on a waiting list.

Please remember that the message from the government and scientists is that everyone is safest at home unless it is really impossible to do so.

Remote Learning

By now, we hope that all children are accessing our password protected, online platform, *Itslearning*. Although this is by no means our ideal method of teaching, I hope that all parents and children will see that this is an enhanced offer compared to what we were able to provide during the first lockdown last year. If you have any questions about remote learning, please do contact us at the school as quickly as possible so we can resolve any issues promptly.

Teachers will be delivering daily lessons including Maths and English as well as other curriculum areas. In addition to this, there will be interesting challenges and exciting projects. Our online provision will continue to grow and evolve.

As a school, we would also ask parents/carers to be considerate of the fact that many teachers are also now having to look after very small children at home themselves, or that they or members of their families may be unwell, as cases of the new strain of COVID-19 continue to rise. I'm sure we will all try to show as much understanding as we can for each other during this difficult time and appreciate that everyone is doing their very best.

Itslearning - Share and Celebrate

From the start of next week, all classes will have a 'Share and Celebrate' folder in the Resources tab of *Itslearning*. Children can upload work, photographs and videos they have been doing during the week so the teacher and the other children in the class can see and celebrate the fantastic effort everyone is making. During the 'Teacher and Child Catch Up' video calls, references will be made to work uploaded and selected pieces will be recognised in a weekly celebration video.

Itslearning - Students Page

Don't forget to log-in to the 'BL Students Page' where there will be weekly assemblies and access to a large selection of extra websites, resources, challenges and projects. Important information about mental health and wellbeing, online safety as well as fitness activities will also be included.

Brindishe Lee Promotional Video/Tour

We hope by now you will have all seen the promotional video on your child's *Itslearning* page. This video is now live on our school website for prospective parents for Reception 2021 as well as other families.

Devices and Connecting Online

Having the right device to access remote learning is essential, and we believe that now we have been able to get devices out to families, all our children have access to some form of computer or tablet to enable them to work properly from home. However, there could still be a number of families needing to use one computer, so if this becomes a problem in your household, do please contact info@brindishelee.lewisham.sch.uk

We appreciate, also, that broadband width and speed can become an issue for some households, and if this does become problematic, please contact us to see if there is anything we can do to help this situation.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Listed below are ideas with helpful web links to support your child's wellbeing while they are at home.

- **Help others** - Just getting your child to help other people can make them feel better. You could arrange a virtual playdate on a video call with family and friends to restore positivity about the world.
- **Look after your body** - Encouraging your child to look after their body by eating healthy food, drinking plenty of water and exercising at home, e.g. Joe Wicks online or logging onto *Itslearning* to follow the Sportacus fitness video's. In addition to this, Mr Trevor and Ms Lovell are launching fitness video's for BL – watch this space! A walk in the park or a bike ride/scoot can help children to keep fit, builds stamina and ensures they are getting fresh air.
- **Place an emphasis on resilience and strength** - Focus on your child's skills, in terms of their daily life. Help them see they have many strengths to help them cope if feeling anxious or upset.
- **Looking after your feelings** - If your child is feeling anxious, try getting them to think about good things that make them happy and that are going well at the moment. You can always get them to keep a diary and write down or draw about how they are feeling.
- **Relax** - There are lots of different ways that your child can relax, which will help them take notice of the present moment, it will also help them develop their creative side:
 - *Arts and crafts, such as drawing, painting, collage, sewing, craft kits.*
 - *Upcycling (using items you would recycle to build and create something new)*
 - *Colouring*
 - *Singing or listening to music Writing a story*
 - *Creating their own dance routines to music*

Fitness - Fancy trying something new?

Yoga is a fantastic, fun exercise that improves posture, flexibility, strength and balance. It can also help children to relax and encourage positive thinking. Why not try it out? All you need is a mat, blanket, or towel find some loose clothing to wear and click on one of the following links.

For younger children:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-BS87NTV5I> & <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ImHIWzP49M>

For older children:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0eJoUIBhLkE> & https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sM5MGLMNN_E

Teacher and Child Virtual Catch Up

Starting next week, we will be opening up the school cloud function on a fortnightly basis, for you to arrange a time for your children to have a video call with their teacher. These calls will take place between 1.00pm and 3.30pm on Wednesday 13th January and Thursday 14th January allowing the chance for your child and the teacher to 'have a catch up', celebrate work and talk through any worries or concerns they may have.

You will be sent a text, asking you to log-in to your Weduc App and to click on the link to book the appointment.

Please email info@brindishelee.lewisham.sch.uk if you require any further support with logging into Weduc.

Other members of staff from the Brindishe Lee team will continue to telephone the children inbetween these video calls.

And finally ... thank you!

We would just like to take this opportunity to thank everyone again for their ongoing support, patience and best wishes during this very challenging time.

As a senior leadership team, we would also like to thank all our staff who have pulled together, are working tirelessly either at home (many with their own children/families) or in school, and who are doing everything they can to provide fantastic learning opportunities. We can not thank you enough!

Best wishes to you all – and your families,
The Brindishe Lee Senior Leadership Team.