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| **Highworth Combined School** |
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| Dear allWelcome back to a Summer Term like no other! How was your holidays? My house and garden have had a whole lot more attention than usual; anything to keep busy!For me the highlight of returning from a school holiday is seeing all of you and catching up with what you’ve been doing. Thinking of this make me miss you lots. My only consolation is thinking about just how exciting and wonderful it will be when we do finally return.There is much speculation in the media about when schools will reopen. I have no more information than you, but it seems likely that if we do open before the new academic year, it will not be to business as usual! Although I will be giving some thought to planning how we might operate whilst adhering to social distancing advice, our continued priority will be the support of pupils, parents and staff during closure.We hope therefore that today, you will return to completing some Home Learning with your children. Our strategy for this remains the same; please read the letter available on this link to be reminded: <https://www.highworth.bucks.sch.uk/web/coronavirus_closure/455368>This link also takes you to the Coronavirus Closure page of our website where you can find everything that you need to know whilst the school is closed. For our teachers, one of the highlights of their day is when they receive children’s work for feedback. Please use the email addresses to keep in touch; children might even receive one of our Virtual Green Cards.School will be open for Emergency Childcare for those families who have received a confirmation of booking letter. I would like to remind you not to phone the school as keeping everyone safe means that we have very few staff on site. For any enquiries, please email: office@highworthcombined.co.ukWe try never to be complacent so senior leaders will be holding a review meeting this week (using Zoom!) to discuss required changes to our current method of operation. I will, of course, communicate any changes in due course. We will also discuss how the important business of the Summer Term will be conducted given current circumstances, and this too will be communicated at a later date.However, I think that it is right to say now, that whatever happens with regard to reopening, we will not be able to hold the usual end of year events (Sports Day, Leavers celebrations, KS2 Performance, Summer Fun Day, End of Year Disco etc). Sadly, it would be foolish of us to compromise all the hard work of the nation in staying home, protecting the NHS and saving lives by going ahead with large gatherings. I know how disappointing this will be for everybody, especially pupils and their families who will be leaving Highworth this July. Year 6, when all this is over, we will find a way to have a very BIG celebration! We have had a steady stream of emails from parents asking us to check their eligibility for Benefits Related Free School Meals. As previously advised, we will be carrying out these checks on a weekly basis. Please may I remind you of the important information about this benefit which may be found using this link to our website:<https://www.highworth.bucks.sch.uk/web/free_school_meals_/468121> We extend a warm welcome to a new member of staff today: Sarah Cox has joined us a teacher. It will be an unusual start for Sarah, but I know that everyone will look forward to meeting her in due course. Schools have been asked to forward an important message from Buckinghamshire Council about accessing health services. I have added the information to the bottom of this communication.Finally, I’ve not been bored enough to try this yet, but you never know… <https://twitter.com/telegraph_sport/status/1250333052363915265>My very best wishes to you all.Clare PankhaniaMessage to parents on using health services during COVIDPlease remember, A&E services and your GP practice are still open during the coronavirus outbreak.GP surgeries are not allowing patients to directly book face to face appointments at the moment, to help stop the spread of the virus. They are, however, more than happy to discuss your case over the phone and to offer advice and guidance. In some cases they may be able to consult by video link, using mobile phones. If clinically appropriate, they can invite you to attend the surgery for an appointment at an arranged time.It is really important to stay well at this difficult time, so please contact your GP surgery if your child is poorly with any symptoms that cause you concern. With so much attention on coronavirus at the moment, we are aware you may be concerned your child has a different illness or may be living with a worrying condition like asthma or diabetes.So, if you are worried, please call your surgery to arrange a telephone consultation, or you can use the AskNHS app to book a call-back if you are 16 or over. This [parent information form](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.buckinghamshireccg.nhs.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2020%2F04%2FParent_Guide_COVID-19-Final.pdf&data=02%7C01%7CRomilly.Knight%40buckinghamshire.gov.uk%7C4ee8feab46bf4e6cccdb08d7e1f82df7%7C7fb976b99e2848e180861ddabecf82a0%7C0%7C0%7C637226328343461931&sdata=qfoB%2FsmYqU4bToQcQ5o4wtZQ4p0UprT4b8oYanU5neU%3D&reserved=0), produced by Barts Health and North-East London STP, gives very useful advice on when to use services like GPs, pharmacists, A&E and 999.All your health service staff are still there for you, even though they are having to do things a little differently. Please don't be afraid to use them if you are concerned about your child's health.Many thanksDaniel FlecknoeConsultant in Public HealthBuckinghamshire Council01296 387054daniel.flecknoe@buckinghamshire.gov.uk  |

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