



Usutu Forest School

1 April 2020

Dear Parents

With School having closed two weeks ago, I thought I would just like to touch base with you all.

You have all been kept abreast of the school's position via the weekly updates regarding the school work, the closing date for holidays and the issuing of reports. We will communicate again regarding the possible commencement date for the second term, on Tuesday 28th April.

The current situation that we find ourselves in is one that I do not think any of us could have ever imagined or thought possible, yet here we are in a time of uncertainty and unpredictability, a time that has far reaching repercussions on every aspect of our lives. I do believe that when this is all over, the way the world operates and thinks about things is going to be very different. This pandemic indeed has far reaching consequences and has been an eye-opening experience.

But how do we deal with the current situation as parents. We have, like many other schools, put together a programme of work for pupils to continue with during this time of forced school closure. Whilst we believe that this is the best course of action during this time, it is important to bear a few things in mind whilst you are monitoring this school-away-from-school programme.

It is important for parents to remember:

- It is early days and your child is probably still digesting the fact that they are not going to see their friends and teachers for the foreseeable future, let alone for them to understand that we are in the middle of a global health crisis.
- We ask that you will support and follow the academic programme that has been designed by the class and subject teachers in as relaxed and calm manner as possible.
- We appeal to you refrain from making your own worksheets, downloading curriculum guides or attempting to teach any new concepts
- Do not attempt to replicate the school environment by setting break times and reconfiguring your house to look like a classroom
- Remember you are not being asked to home-school your children

"Semper Sursum - Always Aim High"

Usutu Forest School

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Executive Head: *David Jennings B.Com (Hons); HDE*



Education is very different to what we all experienced as children. The best thing you can do is to do things with them. Play a board game. Do the dishes and sing a song together. Have them help you with chores, bake cookies, dance together. Enjoy an exercise routine together to stay fit.

Also as important, give them alone time, screen time and ask them to tell you a story. Most importantly be with them and assure them that everything will be OK. You are their parents and family members, not their teachers and this is an ideal opportunity to strengthen that bond.

Whatever happens, we will make sure that your child has the tools they need to succeed in school.

But for now, be a family.

This is indeed uncertain times, and for some, even scary. We do not know precisely what the next few weeks, or even months have in store for us. To say we did would be arrogant and incorrect.

What I do know is that we as Usutu Forest School are in a good position to weather this storm, if we continue to be creative and remain focused. The School Management Team and teachers are prepared to do their utmost to ensure that we get to the other side as best we can. We will continue as a team of educational specialists to limit the effects of this time away from School by providing the best support we can to our parents and pupils during this challenging time. The teachers will continue to explore the best teaching and learning options available in the event that we need to continue this remote learning post 5th May.

I would like you all to know that I am always available to you, to listen to your concerns and your ideas, and to consider them as we navigate this together. Please see my contact details below should you wish to contact me.

We will get through this and our school will once again be a happy and vibrant place, full of energetic and enthusiastic children and staff.

I, for one, cannot wait, and look forward to welcoming you all back when the time is right.

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Blessings to you all as you take on this challenge. Be kind to yourselves, you have got this! The teachers too are in a steep learning curve to serve their students during this time. They can be secure in the knowledge that they have put their best effort into this unfamiliar way of teaching, and that is all we can ask, and we thank them for their commitment to making this as seamless as possible.

In the meantime, please stay safe and healthy and practice the safety precautions we all know so well by now.

Warm regards and best wishes

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