

No 1 Multi Academy Trust for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes

DFE PERFORMANCE TABLES 2019 AND NO 3 IN 2018



Top 10 National Pupil Progress

DFE PERFORMANCE TABLES 2018 AND 2019

22nd January 2021

Dear Parent,

I hope that you and your families remain safe and well during what is a challenging time and thank you for your kind messages asking after the wellbeing of staff here too.

Sadly, since I wrote to you last Friday, we have seen an increase of positive cases in school and nursery. We can appreciate that this must be a worrying time for you and therefore wanted to take this opportunity to reassure you regarding the action that we are taking. Over the past 2 weeks we have had four positive cases within Ellacombe and Little Stars. The school is being supported by the Trust and we are in constant communication with Public Health Torbay. Following each positive case, we undertake a robust joint risk assessment with Education and Public Health Local Authority colleagues and this takes into account both people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and any individuals with symptoms. **This is why we ask you to inform us of anyone with symptoms within our school community even if they have not been in school.**

Looking at the Torbay COVID-19 Dashboard this week (<https://www.torbay.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/coronavirus/coronavirus-reports/>) there have been 322 cases in Torbay in the past week, this compares to only 186 week of 27th December. This webpage allows you to search by local ward and in the Ellacombe ward last week there were 16 cases, up from 4 cases at the end of December. I'm sure these figures are a concern for us all.

As we've seen these numbers increase locally as well as in school, we have been experiencing significant staffing shortages as we follow Public England Advice of self isolation. We know, as key workers ourselves, the sacrifices and hard work that our key workers are contributing towards society at the moment, more now than ever and many of our parents are really on the front line, in care homes, our hospitals and essential food shops. We are still appealing to those who are needing to send their children into school to continually look at their shifts and only send their child to school when absolutely necessary. Thank you, as many families have started to do this.

Asking parents to keep their children at home is never something I thought I would have to do in my career. The impact on the virus is, I'm sure, felt by us all and I think we all now know someone who has been poorly with it. Our staff were shaken this week by the news that a local headteacher has lost her husband to the virus and the family were known personally by several of our staff. This is very real and at the moment we really do continue to appeal to everyone to play their part in this National Lockdown. In all of the meetings I have had over the past week with Tobay and Public Health England, the new variant has been discussed and the additional transmissibility of this is a real concern so we have some updated and important messages for ALL parents:

- Please only send your children to school if the place is needed to support a vulnerable child or to enable key worker parents to work. If you can keep your child at home, please do. If you have one child isolating (due to a bubble closure), please now also keep other siblings at home.



Ellacombe C of E Academy
Ellacombe Church Road, Torquay
Devon, TQ1 1TG
T: 01803 293040 **E:** ellacombe@lapsw.org
W: ellacombe-lap.co.uk



TOGETHER WE EMPOWER EXCELLENCE



- If anybody in the household has symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, temperature, loss of or change to smell or taste), the entire household, including any members of a support bubble, must isolate whilst the symptomatic individual is tested.
- Please do not send children to school with any symptoms of illness even if these are not classic COVID-19 symptoms. These include: **loss of appetite, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting, extreme tiredness, headaches, joint pain, muscle ache, runny nose, sore throat, sneezing, altered consciousness or seizures.**
- Please keep children at home until their symptoms resolve or, if their symptoms develop into a cough, temperature or loss of smell/taste, then continue to self-isolate and arrange a test.
- If your child is currently isolating, please ensure that they only return to school if they are **fully well**. If they have experienced any symptoms during the isolation period and have not been tested, please ensure they are tested before returning to school.
- When Little Stars Childcare Centre reopens next week, this will be only for children of Key Workers and vulnerable children. Thank you to our Little Stars parents who have been working with us on this, this week.

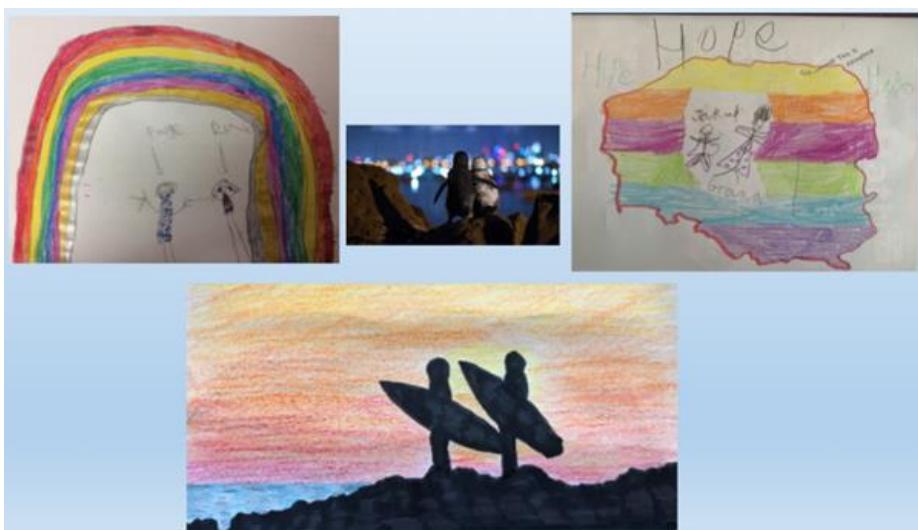
Whilst numbers of Covid-19 are so high both here on Torbay and nationally, I would urge all of our families to ensure that they are stringently following all of the lockdown restrictions, including NOT socialising with other families and only going out when needed. Another rule of lockdown that is vital is the restriction of traveling across the country; this is about keeping our community safe and travel to and from other parts of the UK should not be happening.

I'm sorry that the tone of this introduction is so serious but I felt it important to share with you the situation we are all in. Although a difficult time, we are finding hope in our amazing children. The way in which they have been having a go at Google Classroom, taking part in the live sessions and connecting together has been remarkable. Of course children are all different and some will adapt easier than others but we are so proud of the way in which they are trying and in many cases, helping each other! What inspiring young people we have in our school family!

The rest of this letter sets out to keep you up to date and re share information again in case you missed last Friday's letter, including the support that we are putting on for you grown ups too with your very own Tea @ 2 with Mrs Secker on Wednesdays and Coffee Mornings with our Teams in school. I really would encourage our parent community to come together and take up these offers too. You will also have had class newsletters last week and these will continue to come home each Friday too, with more personalised info from the teachers.

Our Monday Hope Assemblies

We've had an increasing number of children joining our Monday assemblies and it's been lovely to see the children join with siblings, grown ups, teddies and pets too. The children have been great with the discussions and can see the work from each other as well as those accessing learning in school as I do the same assembly in school each Monday too. Last week, the children used an inspiring picture of two penguins who had found friendship and we are taking part in a national project to create a video each week of the art work from across England.



We look forward to next Monday's assembly to see their work inspired by the London Taxi driver- see post on Facebook on Monday for the info in case you missed it.



Live Sessions with Teachers

Feedback from teachers has been that the children are really enjoying these sessions three times a week. The children are becoming more confident to take part in discussions and teachers are setting up all sorts of activities to engage the children. Teachers in the older classes have used these to teach some of the more complex parts of writing and the children are really responding to this. One Y6 pupil said this week "I don't normally like writing, but I do now!". Our younger children have been taking part in lots of fun things in these live sessions including a Teddy Bears picnic and story time. A huge thank you to parents for helping the children get set up with these, we hope that the staggered times are helping as we know how tricky it can be all needing to use a device at once.

Here is a reminder of the Live Sessions we are running:

Day	Who	Time
Monday Live Assembly	Children welcome to join together with siblings and grown ups, led by Mrs Semmens	9.30-9.45 Surnames beginning with A-L 10.00-10.15 Surnames beginning M-Z
Tuesdays/ Thursdays/ Fridays	Children join their teachers for live sessions.	
	Year 6	9:00 - 9:30am
	Year 5	9:30 - 10:00am
	Year 4	10:00 - 10:30am
	Year 3	10:30 - 11:00am
	Year 2	11:00 - 11:30am
	Year 1	11:30 - 12:00pm
Wednesdays	EYFS live session	9.30am
	Tea @ 2 (see below)	2pm



During these uncertain times it is so important to stay connected and talk about our worries. Our coffee mornings are a place where parents can talk openly and connect with other adults in the community who will be experiencing similar challenges. Follow us on Facebook for updates and reminders about our virtual events.

The Family Support team will also be holding virtual coffee mornings every Wednesday and Friday at 10:30am. They will be per year group, here are the dates:

Nursery and EYFS - Wednesday 20th Jan, Wednesday 3rd Feb

Year 1 and 2 - Friday 22nd Jan, Friday 5th Feb.

Year 3 and 4 - Wednesday 27th Jan, Wednesday 10th Feb.

Year 5 and 6 - Friday 29th Jan, Friday 12th Feb.

Looking after ourselves

Even in 'normal' times, looking after ourselves as parents is so important and now we have children at home with us more, it is even more vital to all find ways to look after ourselves. Here are some links to brilliant support that's out there:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

<https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.talkworks.dpt.nhs.uk/> (currently offering a priority service to Key Workers in NHS, Social care and Police)

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/parents-and-carers/supporting-your-child-s-mental-health/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/>

<https://www.thepathway2success.com/10-mindfulness-activities-you-can-try-today/>

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/health/wellness/g32267191/mindfulness-activities/>

[Local support Groups](#)



<https://andysmanclub.co.uk/>

<https://womenswellbeingclub.co.uk/>

Change in circumstances & tricky times

We know that this National Lockdown is not only impacting schools but many people's work and personal lives especially as we are now seeing more people poorly. Please do remember that the support of school remains there for you all, our Family Support and Safeguarding Team are still working full time so please don't hesitate to be in touch if you need any help or support.

Here are some local groups/ helplines which may be of use:

www.RE4orm.org.uk

www.torbayfoodalliance.org

www.whatsyourproblem.org.uk

<https://www.torbay.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/independent-living/arranging-your-own-care/financial-advice/>

<https://www.citizensadvicetorbay.org.uk/>

<https://services.actionforchildren.org.uk/torbay-childrens-centres/>

<https://www.torbay.gov.uk/benefits/other-help/crisis-support/>

<https://www.sanctuary-supported-living.co.uk/find-services/domestic-abuse/devon/torbay-domestic-abuse-service-tdas>

Finally, a huge thank you from me as Head for the support and care that is shown for our staff, from parents. Many of you have been in touch and recognise the work of staff which has been continuous over the past 10 months. I hope and pray our school family remains safe and well and send all my good wishes to those Key Workers doing their vital work throughout these long 10 months too- stay safe.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs E Semmens
Head of Academy