



Dartmoor
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST



Nurture, Inspire, Achieve

A small school, learning together in the local community

5th February 2020

Dear parent/ carer

As we approach the half term holiday, I know that we are all ready for a break from the routine of home learning during lockdown restrictions. Half term week runs from 15th – 19th February and pupils who have been accessing critical worker and vulnerable pupil places return on Monday 22nd February. Although we still don't know for sure when we will have all pupils back in school, we have been given the date 8th March for the possible easing of national lockdown restrictions. On Wednesday 27th January, the Prime Minister announced schools will remain closed until at least Monday 8th March. Until then, we will be continuing to provide remote/ online learning for pupils at home. Thank you for completing our recent parent feedback survey – the results are overwhelmingly positive and really encourage staff that we are doing a good job. It is so encouraging to hear that you feel supported and that learning is accessible, creative and inspiring.



This week has been Mental Health Awareness week. The theme this year is 'Express Yourself'. **Expressing yourself** is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through creativity. This could be through art, music, writing and poetry, dance and drama, photography and film, and doing activities that make you feel good. In times like these, it is important that we are promoting to our children how to find a way to show who they are, how they see the world and how to feel good about themselves. We can all find creative ways to share our thoughts, feelings and emotions through activities like music, art, dance or photography. The importance of children and young people's mental health has never been so critical so here are a few tips to stay happy in lockdown:

Do something that you enjoy – music is a good source of energy or maybe pick up an old hobby.

Always have something to look forward to – this could be just a movie and pizza!

Stick to a schedule – structure gives us all stability and security.

Take screen breaks – get outside and breathe in the fresh air ...

Stay in touch with friends and family – you are not alone, we are all in this together.

There is a great toolkit with links to resources and more here [Draft 2: Children's Mental Health Week Toolkit \(mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk\)](https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk)

Helplines

SHOUT - text 'Shout' to 85258 for 24/7 crisis text support

Childline - under 19s can call 0800 1111 for free support

Education Support - school staff can call 08000 562 561 or text 07909 341229 for 24/7 help and advice

YoungMinds Parents Helpline - Call 0808 802 5544 for free Mon-Fri from 9.30am to 4pm

Sign up for Mentally Healthy Schools coronavirus toolkits.

Go to the Mentally Healthy Schools coronavirus page for more toolkits.

**MENTALLY
HEALTHY
SCHOOLS**



Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families

One of the ways that we foster positive mental health and wellbeing at Lydford is through forest school sessions. This week Mrs Waddington and the children accessing provision have been showing their gratitude and appreciation for their environment. They have prepared flower beds for new life and helped to maintain the site. The sessions (which Mrs Waddington adapts for remote learning) are a fantastic way to get outdoors and connect with nature to nurture the best in us. **Thank you Mrs Waddington** for making forest school accessible to all!

School Lunches There will be a few changes to the current weekly menu after half term. Please see the attached menu for details.

This will be my last newsletter this half term and I can only show my gratitude to you all for being patient with us in what has been an incredibly challenging time for us all. Over half term week, make sure to take care of yourselves and each other. Hopefully we will see some signs of spring appearing and even some sunshine!

With kindest regards,



Mrs D A Petersen



FISH (Fun in School Holidays) is open at St James over the half term break.

[F.I.S.H. Kids | Devon After School & Holiday Clubs | Fun In School Holidays](#)

The lead is Dan Baxter and his number is 07702 756344.



Virtual School Library

Free reading and writing activities from your favourite children's authors from the **National Literacy Trust.**

We are excited to share this website with you

<https://library.thenational.academy>

where every week a popular children's author or illustrator will provide you with free books, exclusive videos and their top three recommended reads. Having access to a school library is really important for children. School libraries nurture a love of reading that can enrich children's literacy skills, academic achievements and mental wellbeing.

Gallery





Devon Norse Menu

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Main	Sausages, Mashed Potato & Baked Beans	Pasta Bolognese & Vegetables	Roast Turkey, Potatoes, Vegetables & Gravy	Sausage Roll, Potatoes Wedges & Vegetables	Mini Battered Fish Fillet with Chips & Vegetables
Vegetarian Alternative	Quorn Sausages	Quorn Mince	Quorn Roast	Veggie Sausage Roll	Vegetable Fingers
Desserts	Ice Cream Tub	Yoghurt Pot	Chocolate Cracknel	Flapjack	Shortbread

This menu will operate as required until further notice commencing Monday 22nd February.

Jacket Potatoes available everyday as a main alternative

Fresh Fruit available everyday as a dessert alternative

Dairy Free & Gluten Free alternatives can be available on request. Please speak to your school office to arrange this.

HOW TO GIVE YOUR CHILD A LIFELONG LOVE OF READING

5 WAYS TO ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO READ

1) MAKE IT ENJOYABLE – whatever you plan to do, the most important thing is that reading doesn't become a grind or, even worse, a punishment. Children become readers when they find a book they enjoy and once books make them happy, they're hooked for life. So don't discourage them from re-reading an old favourite or an old Beano annual, and don't keep encouraging them to read something you loved as a child if they're not keen. Guide and suggest, but as far as possible, let them make the choice themselves. I love Alan Garner's books. My children don't. That's absolutely fine.

2) KEEP IT VARIED – whether it's a novel or a poem, a history book or a science guide, a travelogue or a comic, diaries or jokes, a biography or a picture book, variety is the spice of reading life. As I write, library services are understandably patchy so it's worth checking online before heading to your nearest branch. If you don't have titles at home, then ebooks are an option and if you are able to support them, bookshops will happily send you books in the post. But there's a lot to explore online too. For example, explore Poetryline run by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education at clpe.org.uk/poetryline or search online for the work of performance poets such as Kate Tempest and Caleb Femi.

3) READ OUT LOUD – this is important to do in normal times, but now everybody is unsettled this kind of personal together is a particularly excellent way of comforting your child. You absolutely don't have to be a professional actor to read out loud, but do put plenty of emotion into it (I've always enjoyed doing 'voices' even though they are often truly laughable) and don't go too fast. Older children who have not been read to for a while might also now enjoy this again.

4) DISCUSS THE BOOKS – Chatting about books is a huge part of the reading experience and enjoyable for both you and your child. Ask questions which make them think about what they're reading or encourage them to look for answers in another book, rather than simply broadcasting information at them (but remember they're not doing a school test on it so don't turn it into an interrogation!). If you're reading something together, don't whizz through it as fast as possible, but pause regularly to discuss issues which it raises and connections to other books your child may have read. Think of yourself as a 'reading mentor' rather than a broadcaster.

5) AUDIOBOOKS ARE BOOKS TOO – People not only learn in different styles – visual, auditory or kinesthetic (learning by doing) – but they also enjoy stories in different ways. Traditional books don't suit everybody and audiobooks should certainly not be seen as some kind of fraudulent replacement for a hardback in the hand. Storytelling, after all, is far older than reading a printed book. The biggest commercial player in the audiobook market is Audible, owned by Amazon, Listening Books (www.listening-books.org.uk)

FINALLY, ONE FOR YOU – read yourself. Not only is that great for you, if your children see you reading then they are much more likely to follow your lead.

ALEX JOHNSON