

Dear parents,

It is half term! The weeks seem to have gone very quickly, but also very slowly! Everyone has had to get used to very different ways of working and I know that the situation has been incredibly hard at times. I am delighted every day at how supportive and kind our children are to each other in their lessons, with the quality and content of their work and their amazing creativity and ideas. This has been achieved by us all working together in partnership and through everyone's determination to make the best of the situation that we are in, even though it has been challenging and this lockdown has felt much harder than the previous one.

I thoroughly enjoy looking at the children's work each day and I am so pleased that teachers still find it so difficult to nominate for the Headteacher's Awards because the children are putting so much effort into their learning and doing so much fabulous work!

The staff have been wonderful in adapting what they do and moving to teaching remotely, particularly live teaching. The staff team, keeping school open for the keyworker provision and supporting the children who are in school, as well as those keeping school clean and providing hot meals, have also been amazing. The enthusiasm, commitment, kindness, positivity and simple 'let's just do it' attitude has been wonderful and I am so thankful to the entire staff team for everything they have done this half term.

I would like to say thank you to our wonderful families too for their ideas, feedback and support, taking the time to send lovely messages of thanks (and cake!). The messages have been appreciated hugely by the team and have kept morale high.

We are hoping that the Government announcement after half term will provide more clarity for everyone with regard to schools' reopening. As soon as I know what the plans are and what we need to do, I will let you know!

In the meantime, we are not setting any work for the half term. My instructions to the staff for the break have been to avoid screens, spend lots of time outside walking, cycling, running and enjoy the longer hours of daylight. I am saying the same to our families! Enjoy the break and we look forward to receiving positive news about the WP family being back together soon, because we are all missing each other!

Please find some information below about fuel vouchers for families needing support with paying bills this winter, resources from Place2be and some ideas for activities for half term.

Best wishes

Karen

Fuel vouchers available for families in need this winter

Fuel vouchers are now available to help residents in need pay for their bills over winter, as part of a joint initiative between Hackney Council and East End Citizens' Advice Bureau. The vouchers will be provided to families and individuals who are unable to pay their bills, through the Council's Here to Help phone line, as part of ongoing Council efforts to ensure that residents have the financial support that they need over the winter period.

A maximum of two fuel vouchers will be provided per household. This will be funded through the Government's winter grant funding which the Council is distributing to residents in need this winter. This funding has also been used to provide free school meal vouchers to every pupil in Hackney eligible for free school meals, along with extra support for 2,200 low-income families with younger children, as part of Council efforts to ensure that [no child goes hungry this winter](#).

However, as the Government funding will not provide for every resident in need, extra support is being provided through [Hackney's Community Partnerships Network](#) - a partnership between the Council and local voluntary and community organisations set up to ensure continued support for vulnerable residents affected by the wider impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Residents who are unable to pay for their bills can apply for fuel vouchers by calling the Council's Here to Help phone line on 020 8356 3111.

Place2be resources

The theme of this year's Children's Mental Health Week was **Express Yourself**.

Expressing yourself is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through creativity. It is about finding a way to show who you are, and how you see the world, that can help you feel good about yourself.

As parents and carers, you play an important role in your child's mental health. Check out the free resources from Place2B by following the link below.

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/parents-and-carers/>

Half Term Activities

1. Royal Parks Virtual Discovery Week - 'Emerging from Winter'

'What a re-leaf it's almost spring! Shake off any winter blues and sign up for a week of free spring-inspired virtual interactive activities that will have you and the family enjoying the fresh air.'

<https://www.royalparks.org.uk/whats-on/virtual-discovery-week-emerging-from-winter>

2. Royal Parks - Learn Online

60 suggested tasks and activities with themes such as nature, heritage and wellbeing. We've been told that a prize from Royal Parks awaits anyone who completes all 60 of these tasks over the half term!

<https://www.royalparks.org.uk/learn/learn-online>

3. Stay Home collecting project

'During these extraordinary times, our homes have never been more important. We are documenting how our home lives are changing during the coronavirus pandemic. Read some stories here. This new national collecting project forms part of the Museum of the Home's extensive Documenting Homes archive.'

<https://www.museumofthehome.org.uk/explore/stay-home-collecting-project/>

4. Perfect Pancake Recipe for Kids

'Make delicious pancakes with your kids, try this super simple recipe.'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/makes/pancake-recipe>

5. London's Prettiest Walks

'If you're looking for something to occupy your time, why not walk the city's streets, canal paths, and parks to appreciate the beauty London has to offer. Take in the city's immense skyline, sights that you never had time to visit before, and secluded green spaces.'

<https://www.timeout.com/london/things-to-do/londons-prettiest-walks>

6. The Hidden World of the Tank Room

The tank room at the Natural History Museum houses many of the Museum's 20 million wet specimens stored in alcohol. Take a 360-degree tour with Senior Curator of Fish, Oliver Crimmen, and view highlight images of this strange and spectacular collection space.

<https://artsandculture.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/the-hidden-world-of-the-tank-room-natural-history-museum/pwKCcRCici8lKA?hl=en>

7. 12 Virtual Museum Tours for Kids You Can Do Right This Second

'Being stuck at home can be frustrating, but it's even more so if you have young kids running around looking for something to do. Luckily, in this digital era many museums have put their collections online or created virtual tours that can help alleviate that boredom.'

<https://www.purewow.com/family/virtual-museum-tours-for-kids>

8. Five alternative half term activities

'If your children complain about being bored in the school holidays, or you're looking for some inspiration to get them off the sofa, then look no further! We've listed some simple ideas that are not only fun and engaging, but will also teach little ones important life skills.'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/joinin/dualwa-alternative-half-term-activities>

