

8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

### **SEND Update Letter**

Although the term ahead is not quite, what we imagined, we are hoping that you are all safe, well, and managing to co-ordinate the remote learning. We realise this can be challenging, but we are here to help as much as possible.

#### **Live lessons on MS Teams:**

As you will know, from Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January, the lessons will be live via Microsoft Teams, with your child's teacher. They should follow their usual timetable which is in their school planner.

There are protocols on the school website, which will help and guide you through the process of downloading and setting up MS Teams on any mobile device/tablet or computer. The link to this document on our school website is: <https://bit.ly/2LewiW>

Once you have downloaded MS Teams, your child will need to login with their school username and password. If you have any difficulties doing so, please email IT support so we can resolve the issue for you before Monday's live lessons commence.

#### **IT and internet provision:**

If you do have, any issues with IT provision at home, please contact Mr Ali: [w.ali@decschool.co.uk](mailto:w.ali@decschool.co.uk)

#### **SEND support:**

The SEND and Inclusion Team have been busy supporting the pupils who are working on site as part of the key worker provision, and will be in regular contact with many of you to support you with remote learning, and ensure things are going as smoothly as possible. Feel free to share any difficulties you are having, and they will do their utmost to support you. In addition to that, pupils can email their teachers and use the chat function in their lessons to ask questions of their teachers.

If your child usually takes part in Lexia or IDL- we would recommend that they continue with this work during the closure to support their literacy and numeracy. Once you have settled into the routine of live lessons we will be in touch with you if this applies to you. Likewise, it is recommended that your child completes two sessions of Bedrock each week, as they would do usually, to ensure they prioritise their reading.

Kooth (a mental health service) are offering some live webinars, with one on ADHD on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January – ADHD & Me: Symptoms, Emotions and Coping Skills: *We want to talk about ADHD, from what the symptoms are, how it can make you feel, as well as ideas for coping. So, if you are living with ADHD, know someone with it, or would just like to know more about ADHD then please come along to join us!*

Live forums can be found in the discussion boards and go online at 7.30pm on the evening they are planned. They are moderated in real time until 9.00pm. Visit: <https://www.kooth.com/>



Additionally, attached to this letter there is an invite to a parental webinar being held by Birmingham City Council, which you may find useful, as well as some information regarding support from the Communication & Autism Team.

If you do have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me by email: [l.sullivan@decschool.co.uk](mailto:l.sullivan@decschool.co.uk)

Yours sincerely,

Mrs L Sullivan  
Deputy Headteacher

Mr M Dunn  
Head Teacher

#### ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS (The British Psychological Society.)

- Schools have not 'shut down' – Although most children will not be able to physically attend school you will still be able to communicate with senior leaders, and with your teachers.
- Expect stress – This is an uncertain and unpredictable situation, stress and anxiety are normal.
- Reassure children – Children can sometimes believe they are responsible for things that are clearly beyond their control. Reassure children that it is the adult's job to make sure things are OK and to keep them safe.
- Normalise the experience – Normalising the experience is likely to reduce anxiety for many children. Reassure children that lots of adults and other children are in the same situation.
- Try to keep work in one place – If children are doing schoolwork or project work at home, try to keep it all in one place so that it does not spread out over the house. This can help to maintain a work/home boundary. We know that people live in different circumstances that might mean this is more difficult.
- Reduce access to rolling news – It is important to keep up to date with new developments and announcements, but it can be hard to switch off from the constant stream of news from media outlets and social media. Reduce the time spent hearing, reading or watching news –at the moment it might be overwhelming for adults and children. Try to protect children from distressing media coverage.
- Supervise children with screens – It is likely that children and young people will be using screens more often over the coming weeks e.g. phones, tablets, gaming consoles and the internet. If this is the case make sure they are supervised. Ensure appropriate content filters are active – the UK Safer Internet Centre offers guidance on setting up parental control. Try to ensure all children have a balanced range of activities each day. Involve children and young people in these discussions so that they feel part of the plan.
- Provide reassurance about exams being cancelled – Young people may now be concerned about the announcement that exams later this year will not be going ahead as planned. Reassure young people that the government and Department for Education are working on a plan.



# SEND BRIEFING PARENT WEBINAR

January 2021



Parent/Carer Webinars take place regularly throughout the year and cover a number of different topics. Please see the local offer website for further details. Each webinar should last approximately one hour and take the format of a presentation followed by an opportunity to ask questions.

## Occupational Therapy

**Stability Ability – raising awareness of the importance of core stability in completing everyday activities and strategies to help.**

**Speakers: Janet Tighe, Sarah Gallagher, Katie Richards and Gordon Heath (SEND Occupational Therapists)**

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January-** Older Primary and Secondary Age Children

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January-** Early Years and Primary Age Children

**Tuesday 12th January 2021**

**at 10.30 am – 11.30am –**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/send-ot-stability-ability-for-older-primary-and-secondary-age-pupils-tickets-133842515567>

**Wednesday 13th January 2021**

**at 1.30pm – 2.30 pm –**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/send-ot-stability-ability-for-early-years-and-primary-age-pupils-tickets-133845101301>



# COMMUNICATION AND AUTISM TEAM (CAT)

*COVID-19 & Advice  
for Parents / Carers*



Currently the nation is experiencing a situation we have not seen before. It is requiring us all to change our normal routines and may be causing your child with autism to feel concerned and present some challenges for you as a parent and/or carer.

The Communication and Autism Team are here to help you during this difficult time. Our families and children are really important to us and we are here to provide you with support through our telephone helpline service.

You can get advice and support on a range of topics, including the following:

- Strategies to support access to home routines
- Motivating and engaging your child
- Tips for helping your child /young person to manage their school work at home
- Social communication and interaction
- Sleeping, eating and personal hygiene
- Wellbeing
- Structure and routine
- Coping with new routines
- Helping your child to understand what is happening
- Looking after yourself

We would like to assure you that our support remains available to you by telephone throughout this period.

If you would like to access this service please email [CATParentEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:CATParentEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk) with the following information:

- Your name
- The telephone number you would like to be contacted on
- The name of your child's school
- Times and dates you are not available

We will then arrange for a member of the team to call you back as soon as possible.

*"We can do this if we all work together as a family"*

Birmingham SEND Youth Forum

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