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16th June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you all safe and well. Castle Park welcomed more children back to school yesterday and despite it looking and feeling very different, I am very proud of the way that that children adjusted to the new 'normal', adapting to new ways of working and interacting sensibly and maturely.

However, I am very aware that two thirds of our school community have not returned either through choice or because we do not have capacity, under the current guidance, to open to more year groups due to lack of classroom space or staff availability. The government are now beginning to acknowledge that it was unfair to raise the expectations of children and parents, as welcoming back more year groups was never going to be achievable with the current social distancing requirements and school staffing capacity.

The staff and governors are saddened and frustrated about this situation, as you will be too. We want nothing more than all classes to return to school to continue their education, but that is not going to happen in the near future. Therefore, school has been looking at how we can keep in contact with the pupils who are not in school, providing work assignments that will motivate and capture their interest and build on the work packs on the Dropbox links. We are aware that the children want to share their home learning with their teachers and the teachers are also eager to see how much the children have learned and the progress they have made at home. We realise that home schooling is very challenging and want to support you as much as we can.

To that end, we are looking to develop a home learning platform, where pupils can share the work they are doing at home with teachers in school. School is moving quickly with this development and I will be in touch shortly about how to access this platform as soon as I can.

Meanwhile, the latest work packs will be available on Dropbox today using the following links as usual:

Early Years

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/uc02fp1w42trccz/AACugg8DbmYE1yr0i9wWAv33a?dl=0>

Key Stage 1

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/n9kbu529d4uf4g8/AAAbua9NxMa8iZtVr9I3JgDYa?dl=0>

Lower Key Stage 2

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/r3p3d1ir7c7w6rx/AAA8QVF4_29RrBKifrFcMiFna?dl=0

Upper Key Stage 2

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/kb7dnk9wcceq8vu/AADPBfR49f_bQPNk7Pe6rpbWa?dl=0





During the last weeks, school has been keeping in touch with specific families through phone calls and home visits to over 70 children as well as caring for the children accessing childcare, but we are aware that there are a great many families that have not had any contact with school since we closed. Some children have kept in touch by letter and email and that has brought pleasure to both teachers and children alike. We are very sorry that we have not been able to do more, but with reduced staffing and being open throughout the last 12 weeks providing childcare, it has not been possible.

We do not wish families to feel that they have been forgotten as that is certainly not the case, but we are acutely aware that there are families and children who would appreciate contact from the school. Unfortunately, we do not have capacity to phone the families of over 200 pupils, but we can focus our attention where there is the most need. Therefore, if you are worried about your child and would like to talk to a member of staff or feel that your child would benefit from a telephone call from their teacher, please contact the school office by phone or email (admin@castle-park.cumbria.sch.uk) and we will contact you as soon as possible.

For your information, Mrs Hussey, the School Business Manager, left the school at the beginning of May. As we have not yet secured a replacement, Mrs Barrett and I will continue to support requests to the school office but please be patient as we are very understaffed at the current time. Thank you.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your commitment to supporting the education of your child(ren). The school will do everything we can with the resources available to support your home schooling and trust that you will continue to work with the school to achieve the best for your child in the present circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs H F Richardson

Headteacher



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Silver Award
Awarded by Arts
Council England

