

21<sup>st</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents

We are delighted that so many children are engaging well with home learning. Again, I take my hat off to you for all the support you are giving your children. It is really hard to juggle teaching with 'the day job', if you are trying to do both. We do appreciate that it may mean that many of you are having to shift the order of your days, which must be exhausting.

At this stage, we have no further information about how long we will be continuing as we are. I gather that the DfE usually hear at the prime minister's briefings too!

We need to remind you that although the zoom meetings are going well, they do have risks. If you have any concerns about these, please do feel free not to have cameras on. Equally, it's important that these meetings are not recorded by your child – it is against our school's code of conduct to do this – and we are sure that you will ensure that this does not happen to protect all children's privacy.

On another matter, we are aware that many families' circumstances have changed. This may mean that finances are considerably strained. You may now find that your child is eligible for free school meals or you would welcome food bank vouchers. The latter are held by me – do contact me by telephone (in confidence), should they be helpful.

Eligibility for free school meals:

- income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Further information can be found: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/free-school-meals/>

Applications are generally processed really rapidly by the West Sussex team.

The children at home are truly missed by all the staff. We look forward to a time when we can be reunited as a school community. In the meantime, please send our love to the children.

Take care.

*Fiona*