



# Catshill First School and Nursery

Date of Issue: Thursday 2nd April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

After two weeks of schools being closed for our usual work, I hope that you have been able to find a new sense of normal even if everything seems so strange right now.

The stresses and pressures of all that is going on is difficult for everyone so please don't feel that you are on your own if you are finding it hard to know what is right and how to make sense of the situation. We're all having to adjust to the new expectations and it's not always easy.

Children as well as adults are worried about the worldwide problem of Covid 19. The doctors and the scientists are working hard to find a solution for the virus; the politicians are managing the situation on a national level; our job is to try to manage and make sense of the situation for our households and families - our own world.

Along with some of the staff, I have been in school this week supporting our childcare provision for the children of critical workers. If we had all been in school this week, we would have had the Key Stage 2 play, our Easter celebrations, a home learning assembly, the Early Years egg decorating and rolling, a visit to Catshill Baptist Church and the Open the Book team in to share the Easter Story. Sadly, we can't do any of those activities and the school seems too empty and quiet.

The Catshill First School and Nursery teachers and staff are all missing their classes and send their Easter greetings to you all.

If you have been able to visit our website, I hope that you have found some of our learning suggestions useful. I must make it clear though that the work and activities that we are setting is for you to choose or not choose. We are **NOT** expecting parents to home school their children. The teachers have uploaded ideas and guidance of things that could keep your child occupied during this very strange time and they will continue to do this while schools are closed. Some schools have sent home more and some have sent home less. Our First School age children can thrive on learning through playing and through doing activities such as baking, making and talking.

Some parents are at home and can facilitate the work that is sent by school. Some like the structure that it gives. Parents and carers can support this by having a routine, providing (where possible) a quiet space to work and encouraging children by talking to them about their learning (not teaching them).

Other parents are working in hospitals or other key roles and are not able to do this. Others are juggling working at home, childcare and managing their busy lives and are not able to do this. Others have limited or no internet access and are not able to do this. Others have sickness in their family and are not able to do this.

**Please do not stress** if your child is not accessing the work set. When we are all back in school, the teachers will work out where all the children are at, they will rebuild the learning from the different starting points and use their training and skills to move the children forward again.

It is a time in history that won't be forgotten and the children's mental and physical health needs are the most important things to cherish right now. Talking about feelings and answering questions is the best way to help children to understand what is going on. I believe that it helps if you try not to have the news on all the time and to put screen time limits in place where you can.

If you are worried about keeping up academically, the important learning elements are reading, some writing and keeping maths skills sharp. These can be done in any way and the practical, fun ways are often easier to do to engage reluctant children. Feeding the children's imaginations with stories, free play and creative opportunities will all enhance their skills and keep them busy.

Above all, please look after yourselves and those around you.  
With best wishes from  
Mrs Georgia Plant

Stay safe, stay inside and keep washing your hands



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Value of the month: Our value for April is **Togetherness**  
In these strange times when we've been asked to stay apart, how have you found ways to be together? Try to think of someone who might appreciate a text or a call so you can show them you care.



## Weekly Update

We hope you have had a good week and that you have been able to access some of the home learning work this week.

Please look on our website to access ideas and activities. We update our **out of school learning** every Friday (in term time). New learning for the Summer Term will be found under the parent tab on our school website or by using this link: [Out of School Learning](#)

If you want to catch up with something that was set before, all previous weeks' learning has moved to the year group pages.

Please see our latest **storytime** section for videos of school staff sharing books and other messages with you [Story Time](#)

The Speech and Language team have added to their wonderful resources (not just for those with speech needs) [Resources for Children's Speech and Language](#) There's a great new resource included which helps children to deal with coronavirus anxieties.

We wish you all a very happy Easter.

It will certainly be an Easter that we won't forget.  
If we had been in school, we would have celebrated in lots of ways.

Can you make your own celebrations?

Maybe decorate an egg, write an Easter poem or make an Easter garden? Have an Easter Egg hunt and hide some decorated eggs if you can.

I hope that, even with the restrictions on going out, you will be able to enjoy some chocolate treats and surprises.

## Staying Active #StayInWorkOut



It is important for our minds as well as our bodies to try to stay fit and active even while the restrictions of movement and rules on social isolation are in place. There are lots of ways to exercise at home and the Government's advice still allows us to take one form of exercise such as a walk, bike ride or run each day.

After the holidays, ideas from the All Active Academy will be shared via our school social media accounts or on Twitter [@all\\_cic](#) and Facebook [@allactiveacademy](#)



Please click [Governors](#) to see a message from the Governing Body



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## Online Safety

While we are staying at home, our use of technology has definitely increased and new ways to connect with family, friends and colleagues are being found all the time. Lots of these are welcome and have brought the people who we cannot be with into contact.

Sadly, it also means that opportunities for online abuse are increasing and we must all be alert to dangers such as cyber-bullying and contact/grooming from those unknown to our children.

It is vital that you are all staying alert to the online safety messages that we share. Please see our school website for further details [eSafety](#)

The Think You Know website [Thinkuknow - home](#) is a useful source of support. Their safety at home section is particularly relevant.

[https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/support-tools/home-activity-worksheets?utm\\_source=Thinkuknow&utm\\_campaign=03cb8440df-TUK ONLINE SAFETY AT HOME 24 03 20&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0b54505554-03cb8440df-55342937](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/support-tools/home-activity-worksheets?utm_source=Thinkuknow&utm_campaign=03cb8440df-TUK ONLINE SAFETY AT HOME 24 03 20&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0b54505554-03cb8440df-55342937)



We have had this important message from Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service

### How to Stay Fire Safe

- You should have working smoke alarms fitted on every level of your home. They give you vital time to 'get out, stay out and call 999' if ever you're unlucky enough to have a fire. And it's crucial that you test them regularly – we advise once a week.
- With more people staying at home, we are asking everyone to be extra careful, to avoid fires happening in the first place...some top tips
- If you're at home because you're ill or self-isolating, please take extra care if you're cooking. Most house fires start in the kitchen. Always 'Watch what you heat'.
- Switch off any electrical items you're not using. If you use a charger, for a phone or laptop for example, don't leave it plugged in and switched on when you're asleep or not using it.
- Candles should be secured safely in a proper holder and never left unattended. Same with a portable heater, remember not to put it close to things that could easily catch fire, like bedding, clothes, soft furnishings or curtains.
- If you smoke, be extra vigilant. Keep matches and lighters away from children, and double check that your cigarette is properly extinguished. Try not to smoke if you've been drinking alcohol, and avoid smoking in bed or if you're feeling sleepy. If you can do so safely, smoke outdoors.
- Whenever possible, especially when you're asleep, keep all internal doors closed. This helps to stop fire spreading.
- Plan and practice an escape plan and make sure everyone in the house is aware. If a fire does happen, don't be tempted to tackle it yourself. Get out (closing doors as you go), stay out and call 999.

Please share these messages with friends and family, and check in with those who may be older and more vulnerable. If you would like any further advice please visit [www.hwfire.org.uk](http://www.hwfire.org.uk) or call 0800 032 1155

