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3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

Dear Parents

Just reminding you all that today the children would have been finishing term 2 and will be now be off for two weeks. During the Easter break, there will be no daily work set on Google Classroom or the school website. The staff have all set lots of Easter activities that the children can do if they wish to.

I have been so impressed with all the work the children have been doing over the last two weeks. The ICT skills of the Orchard County family have really improved. I want to thank you all for supporting your children through these daily tasks. I know it's not easy, especially if you are still working or trying to work from home. If you have more than one child it is also difficult, as you may not have enough devices for them to work on and you are also a teacher of multiple daily tasks. So we do understand if some children are not getting their tasks completed daily. We really do appreciate all that you are doing. The staff are setting their daily lessons according to their class curriculum. You may want to use the Easter break to catch up.

I also want to say a special thank you to all the teachers who have also been on a steep learning curve and have done a tremendous job providing daily lessons for all our children.

Remember that for nursery pupils your daily activities are on the website, under **Pupils Area-Home Learning** (remember the password is apple18). I hope are enjoying Mrs Kaestner reading you a bedtime story! P1-7s have also some activities and ideas on the website but the majority of their work is through **Google Classroom**. Please remember to click 'hand in' so the teacher knows you have completed your work and it is ready for marking.

If you have a problem getting your child logged on to Google Classroom, please contact Mr Crawford [mcrawford726@c2kni.net](mailto:mcrawford726@c2kni.net) He is our ICT coordinator and will hopefully be able to help you.

### **RESOURCES**

Remember to continue to use the many free resources available:

- PE with THE BODY COACH- Joe Wicks home work out on You Tube Mon-Frid at 9am
- DAVID WALLIAMS- 20 min free audio story at 11am everyday
- HOPE FOR YOUTH MINISTRIES- Colin Tinsley usually comes into school for a week each year and our children really enjoy this. Pupils can tune in to his school assemblies on a Mon, Wed & Friday. The pupils can sing along to some of our favourite choruses, hear Bible stories, pray, take part in question time and there are follow-up worksheets to download.
- TWINKL website- free resources for all age groups

### **FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

As a result of school closures due to the Coronavirus outbreak, the Minister for Education and Minister for Communities has agreed to make payment of £2.70 per child, per day to families who have been assessed as eligible for free school meals. Please visit the Education Authority's website for more information. Payments will commence week commencing 30th March and continue fortnightly.

Continue to page 2

### TRANSFER- AQE

Before we got off, I spoke with P6 about the AQE transfer test in P7. If your child intends to do this, please confirm this with myself or Mrs Allen during the week beginning 20<sup>th</sup> April. We will then be in touch with you to arrange additional tasks and tests for your child. In the meantime, you may want to sign up to 'The Transfer Tutor' to help prepare your child, as it has a specific focus on NI AQE tests.

### KEY WORKERS

The school has remained open over the last two weeks and will be open for some days during the Easter holidays for supervision of children of key workers, who have no other viable childcare facility to facilitate them getting to work. This is for supervision only. I am grateful to the school staff who are providing this service for those parents in need.

If you need to avail of this service, please email me by **3pm each Friday** to tell me your requirements for the following week. We aim to maintain this service as long as we have adequate staff cover.

### SPRING AND NEW LIFE

At this time when we are confined to our home surroundings, sometimes it is nice to sit quietly and look out the window at the beauty around us. Everyday I drive into school, I see the beautiful crocuses and daffodils that the children planted earlier in the year with the Rotary Club. It makes me smile, as I remember the fun the children had that day. We still have a lot to be thankful for.

As we all look forward to better times, I want to finish with a verse that I have gone to many times over the last few weeks

**'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble'**

**Psalm 46 v 1**

Have a lovely Easter break and I hope you all stay safe and well. Keep sending us lots of photos of what your children are up to. Updates will be posted regularly on the school website.

Please remember if you need any help, please contact any of the staff by email.

Yours faithfully

*J McMillan*

Principal

