

Viking Academy Trust

Mrs Michaela Lewis (BA Hons)
Executive Headteacher
Email: eht@vikingacademytrust.com
Tel: 01843 597695
Web: vikingacademytrust.com
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Chilton Primary School
Chilton Lane
Ramsgate
Kent
CT11 0LQ

Dear Viking Parents/Carers

Viking Academy Trust: Term 3 update...

I am writing to you following the Prime Minister's announcement yesterday that schools across the country will not reopen fully until at least Monday 8th March. This news, whilst not completely surprising, has at the very least, taken away the uncertainty and speculation of when children will return. Our Viking leaders are now able to plan for, at least, four more weeks of 'remote learning' and prepare for our schools to fully reopen on 8th March.

As a mother and a Headteacher, I share the frustration you must be feeling – knowing the majority of our children will not be back in the classroom any time soon. Whilst I am powerless to change this – I want to reassure you, we – Miss Arthur, Mr Budge, Mrs Law and I - are doing everything we can to ensure our pledge to provide, '**high-quality remote learning**' is an absolute truth and not an empty promise.

We also want to ensure every Viking family feels supported by us during this time. Whilst we are realistic to know we haven't a 'magic-wand' to make everything right – we do proudly stand at the centre of our community and want to be able to do everything we can to work with you, alongside you, to ensure all of our children come through this torrid time having been protected and supported by home and school in partnership.

What is the current state of play in our schools? Chilton, RAPS & Upton are 'partially' open to provide on-site provision for our most vulnerable children and those pupils of critical workers. To ensure our schools are safely open, in a covid-secure way, the offer of childcare within school is reviewed weekly. If, as a critical worker, you have the capacity to keep your child at home in order to reduce the number of people in school, then we ask for you to please do this.

For families with a 'vulnerable' child at home, Mrs Claxton (Upton SENCo), Mrs Hughes (Chilton & RAPS SENCo) or your Head of School will be in contact to discuss learning support and provision between now and 8th March. If you believe your child meets the 'vulnerable' criteria and you haven't had contact from the school, please do contact your Head or SENCo for support.

Corona-virus Testing for Primary School Staff... This week, staff have begun 'twice-weekly' lateral flow testing (LFT) to check they are not covid positive and asymptomatic. These tests are undertaken on a voluntary basis and my thanks go out to everyone that has agreed to participate in this as it is another step forward to make our schools as safe as possible for everyone.

In addition to this, our staff wear face coverings in all communal areas, with many electing to also wear these throughout their entire duration on-site. There is no expectation for primary-aged children to wear a face covering in school – however, this is a personal decision for every family to make and we do have children that wear coverings in the classroom. Our school staff will look to support you, whatever you decide.

We do however ask all parents (unless exempt) to wear a face covering when entering the school site as a measure to reduce transmission of the virus, and thank you for your continued cooperation in this matter.

'One Childhood, One Chance'



Chilton Primary School, Ramsgate Arts Primary School and Upton Junior School are operated by Viking Academy Trust which is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 09449979. The Registered Office is at Chilton Primary School, Chilton Lane, Ramsgate, Kent, CT11 0LQ. Viking Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

High-quality Home Learning: Thank you to the many parents that have shared feedback with their school regarding the quality of learning we are currently providing. As I have shared previously, whilst we appreciate it is never going to replace the quality of education taking place all day, every day in school – we have worked hard to provide engaging lessons for our children (& their parents) to participate in. The (virtual) face to face contact (hopefully) reduces the anxiety children may feel at being away from school and apart from their friends and teaching staff.

One of our Viking mottos is, **‘Getting Better Never Stops’** and with this firmly planted in the fabric of our schools – we are continually reviewing our ‘remote learning’ offer to ensure it is the best we can offer our children at this time. Alongside planning and delivering lessons, our teachers are also contacting every family, to firstly check how children are feeling – on and off the screen – as well as to offer further support and ascertain if there are any barriers to learning that we can assist with. Please be honest with us – and let us work with you and support you at this time.

IT support... Microsoft Teams (office 365) is by now, familiar in every Viking home. Who knew, 10 months ago, that we would become so ‘au fait’ with technology. That said, personal experience (this morning, at home with my daughter’s laptop taking on a mind of its own!) has shown that however confident you may be with technology – hiccups can occur at any time.

If you experience any difficulties with Wi-Fi, laptop, iPad or any other device – please do get in touch. Our highly skilled (and very patient) IT team have produced a number of **‘How To...’ guides** and support videos to assist parents (and staff). Please [click here](#) to access these. Contact the school office if you have any technical/password issues or if your home is having issues with the internet and we will endeavour to support you.

We do appreciate the challenges that come with home learning; for the children, parents and staff. I promise we will do our utmost to support families – not just with IT issues but also with ensuring children continue to feel part of their school family and that we focus upon positive mental health and well-being as well as ‘academic’ learning.

Please do not feel you are alone in navigating through the next four weeks. Get in touch with us and allow us to help where we can.

Now more than ever, it is vital we look after our mental well-being as well as our physical health. Our **‘Worried?’** page on each school site contains helpful resources to support well-being at home as well as links to numerous sites that share information and contact details for organisations available to support children and families during these challenging times. Please do take the time to look & click on the link below:

Chilton Worried page	RAPS Worried page	Upton Worried page
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We update these pages regularly, so please do go on and look at the shared resources. NEW for this week... look out for the webinar on Anxiety created by Kent Educational Psychology Service for parents.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS: We have communicated with families currently in receipt of free school meals and have also shared with **all** Viking families the information required to apply for free school meals. (Please [click](#)

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here for further information). I strongly advise families to complete the application if any of the reasons below apply to you:

- 1) You have a child in Year R, 1 or 2 that receives universal infant free school meals* but could meet the threshold for Free School Meals (FSM) application
- 2) You have a child in Year R, 1 or 2 that receives universal infant free school meals* and another child in Year 3, 4, 5 or 6 that receives Free School Meals.
- 3) Recent circumstances have changed your financial situation and therefore you may now meet the criteria to be in receipt of Free School Meals.

*Please note: Universal Infant Free School Meals is a nationwide government initiative. EVERY child of infant school age is in receipt of this. It is different from Free School Meals (FSM). An application must be completed for you to receive FSM.

The reason I am urging you to ensure your details are as up to date as possible is due to the voucher system used for FSM during periods of school partial closure.

FSM HALF TERM Update: The government yesterday confirmed families eligible for FSM will receive support during the February half-term via the 'Covid Winter Grant Scheme' which is run by Kent County Council. Our school office will share further details as soon as we receive information from KCC.

Test & Trace Support Payment Scheme: If you are asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace and you're on a low income, unable to work from home and will lose income as a result, you may be **entitled to a payment of £500** from your local authority under the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme.

For more information and check your eligibility, please [click here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/test-and-trace-support-payment-scheme-claiming-financial-support/claiming-financial-support-under-the-test-and-trace-support-payment-scheme) or visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/test-and-trace-support-payment-scheme-claiming-financial-support/claiming-financial-support-under-the-test-and-trace-support-payment-scheme>

Please do not hesitate to contact me or your child's Head if you have any questions or would like further advice. Whilst I cannot promise to have the answers, I can assure you we will do everything we can to offer our support at this challenging time.

More than ever, I urge you to **STAY STRONG, STAY SAFE AND STAY TOGETHER!** There will be an end to this; the vaccine brings a light at the end of the tunnel - we just have to make sure we get there in one piece, as individuals, as well members of our Viking family, a community that we each work so hard and so faithfully for.

Keep calm, stay wise, be kind!

Michaela

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Click here: [FOOD BANKS](#) & other support available in Thanet during this challenging time.



Kent Coast Volunteering

Thanet Hub

Home About Coronavirus Help & Support Leisure & Social Health & Wellbeing Community Contact ▾

Coronavirus - Changing Minds -
The Lifeboat project



07467 034812

Coronavirus - Cliftonville
Community Centre



07529 248188 available Mon to
Fri 10:30am-3:30pm

Coronavirus - Global Generation
Church



01843 226232

Coronavirus - GRASS Food
Voucher Scheme



07761 916654

Coronavirus - Margate
Independent Food Bank



07443 890082 or 07752
605042

Coronavirus - Millmead
Children's Centre



01843 280555

Coronavirus - Ramsgate Family
Food Bank



01843 596777

Coronavirus - Salvation Army,
Margate



01843 298260

Coronavirus - Salvation Army,
Minster



01843 822308

Coronavirus - Salvation Army,
Ramsgate



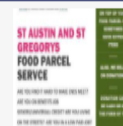
07900 497326

Coronavirus - Six Bells Children's
Centre



0300 041 1666

Coronavirus - St Austin &
Gregory's Food Parcel Service



01843 220825

Coronavirus - Thanet Food Link -
St Pauls Food Bank (Margate)



01843 447187

Coronavirus - Thanet Food Link -
St Peters Food Bank
(Broadstairs)



07385 290358

Coronavirus - Thanet Iceberg
Project



01843 500021

The Community Outreach
Project



07760 352290

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