



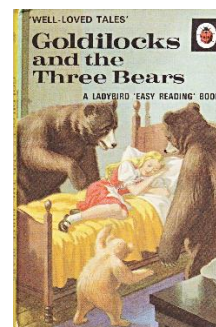
Monday 30 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this letter finds you all well and managing the various new demands and pressures.

### *The Goldilocks Zone – Not Too Much and Not Too Little?*

We hope the letters sent to you in the past week were helpful. We also understand that during this initial phase of school closure and disruption there has been an enormous amount of information for us all to read and process. I am hoping that we can all begin to get used to some new rhythms in our lives and have significantly less new information heading our way each day.



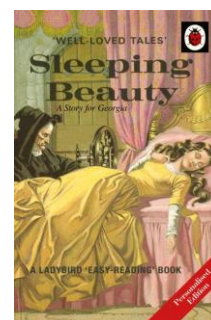
### *Free School Meals*

In the first week of school closure, we provided a delivery service which we have now brought to a close. This is because we are able to provide families with grocery vouchers instead. If you have a child who is eligible for a free school meal then please look out for a separate letter from me in the post either tomorrow or Wednesday.

### *Message to All Students*

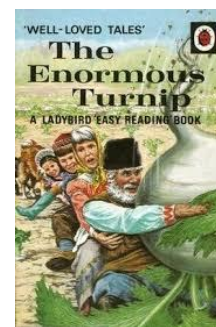
For many, the novelty of a school closure has worn off and the reality of social distancing is really tough to bear. My advice to you is as follows:

- **Establish a new routine:** Don't have late nights and lie-ins. It is a bad habit to form and an even harder one to break. You do not have to start at 8:40am but make sure you negotiate a sensible period of time each day to keep up with your school work.
- **Don't fall behind:** If you are spending well under or well over five hours per day on your studies then there is a problem. Remember, get in touch with your teachers if you don't understand the work, or if there are other reasons why you are struggling to keep up with SMHW. You can also email your Tutor, PSA or Head of Year if there is a bigger problem you are struggling to overcome.
- **Switch off Netflix, Disney+, Amazon Prime and all the other streaming services:** They are great fun for an hour or two, but don't waste your life and this time with things you'll soon forget and may then regret. This is your time to grow, not slump on the sofa.
- **Spend time with your family:** Overcome that irritating brother or sister, look for ways to help out your folks and plan to look back on this time with pride at the way you all pulled together.



Continued...

- **Learn to do something new or different:** Now is the time to stop putting off learning how to play that guitar, reading that book, growing those vegetables, learning how to garden, painting your first landscape, fixing your own bike, making your own clothes, baking those first macaroons or climbing those trees once again.

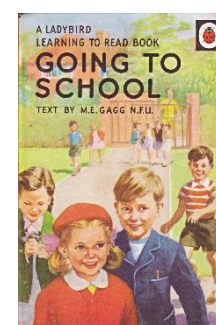


### *Message to All Parents and Carers*

I suspect that at the end of this period in our lives, some of you will be keen to become a teacher or Learning Support Assistant— why not? Like me, I am sure you are struggling a little to know when to step back and let them work independently and establish their own routines, and when to step in and direct matters. It's certainly taken me and my wife a full week to *begin* to get to know what works and what does not in our house - but one family's solution is rarely going to be another's.

Some tips from me include:

- Agree a few **sensible routines**: The vast majority of children respond really well to consistency and clarity. We'll all also find getting back to school that much easier if we maintain some elements of normality.
- Support them but **don't let them become too dependent on you** for everything. We hope that teachers are setting step by step tasks that are easy enough to follow. Don't feel you have to be the sage on the stage - more like the guide on the side.
- Make them **tidy up at the end of each day** to give each day a sense of a 'beginning' and an 'end'.
- We have assumed that most children will not have their own device or a printer and so **good old fashioned pen, paper and books** will be just fine. Therefore feel free to **reduce screen time**.
- Be aware of when we, as adults, project our own frustrations, worries and anxieties on to them. It is hard to keep smiling and being positive when we are worried about relatives, the world, jobs and the economy. I know that many colleagues will say that the toughest part of our job is **drawing that veil every day so that the children in our care do not experience the worries we might have as an adult**. This might be the toughest part of working with children.



### *Message to Year 11s and Year 13s*

All schools are expecting an announcement from the Government regarding how teachers will be required to submit predicted grades. We shall be in touch as soon as any information is received.

### *CNS Learning Hub*

All went well last week and we now enter a second week with a new rota of teaching and associate staff. We shall be open throughout the Easter holidays for the children of key workers and therefore trying to do our bit to keep the country moving.

If you feel we have missed something or need to improve the way that we are approaching any aspect relating to this closure then please do not hesitate to email me personally on:

[head.4010@chipping-norton.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:head.4010@chipping-norton.oxon.sch.uk).

Take care and best wishes,

Barry Doherty  
Headteacher