

Investors in Families Lockdown Award checklist

This award will be given to schools that have supported children and families throughout the ‘lockdown’. It’s aim is to celebrate and acknowledge the dedication, support, guidance, care and nurture that you have provided during the epidemic.

Communication

How have you communicated with families?	What platforms did you use?	Frequency of communication?
Daily contact – day to day at the door and senior leader at the gate	Senior leader outside during opening times and throughout operation of hub	Daily
Socially distanced inductions and meetings outside during warmer weather	Socially distanced face to face	As required
Induction packs – containing prospectus, photographs, power point print out with all the information shared at induction, all the forms needed to register child at Fairoak	Paper copies, hand delivered where possible	Before child starts
TEAMS inductions - meeting to introduce staff, discuss routines and operational guidance, talk about the curriculum, the paperwork received and answer any queries or concerns.	Microsoft TEAMS	New starters – July, December, January, February
Regular updates – what is happening, newsletters, COVID information, etc.	Email, Twitter, Our Schools App	On average two or three times a week
Blended Learning Grids – see below for more information	Email	Weekly “menu” throughout lockdown and to children self-isolating due to COVID



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Sharing of information – accidents, incident between children, wellbeing etc. (see below)	Telephone	Whenever there has been an “incident”
Parental consultations	Telephone/TEAMS	Termly
Welfare checks (see below)	Telephone, email, written	At least every other week, weekly in some cases, followed up with emails or hand delivered letter when no contact made.

Engagement

How have you engaged with families?	Was this successful? What were the barriers?	What would you do differently?
Hub – daily during lockdown	Hub for vulnerable children and children of key workers. Fortunately, our numbers were small enough for there not to be any barriers in terms of operation, however children missed their friendship groups.	Ran according to Government/Local Authority guidelines
Telephone calls made weekly during periods when school not open to all pupils	Successful in identifying parents who needed to be phoned more often; gave parents an opportunity to talk particularly those without extended families; gave opportunity to ask advice with regard to wellbeing, behaviours, additional engagement activities etc. Barrier for working parents who were unable to answer. Followed up with emails to anyone not contacted by telephone. Letters hand delivered to homes in two instances of no contact – one resulted in email. Barrier – reliant on parents either ringing back when they received a message or time to phone back.	Unfortunately, we are limited on the number of telephones we have. Looking into a text to parents service where we can text every parent.



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<p>Emails/letters - Emails sent with regular updates and when telephone contact could not be made</p>	<p>Successful as these enabled us to reach all parents very quickly; allowed a lot of information to be shared and provided a written record of important facts; Parents could get in touch with us easily and allowed for them to respond when convenient for them. Emails monitored weekends and holidays which provided reassurance and stopped parents worrying outside normal school hours. Barrier – as some parents have emails on their phone only, they cannot always open attachments. Therefore, everything has to be copied into the text of the email. This can then have problems if text boxes have been used as in some cases they are perceived as images and are not displayed.</p>	<p>Investigating Text to Parents service and researching “Seesaw” app.</p>
<p>Home/school videos</p>	<p>We have been sending home videos made by staff. These have included stories, uplifting messages, modelling of activities, fun in the snow, a Christmas extravaganza, etc. Parents have also been sending us videos of their child engaging with the learning experiences. Barrier – IT has been difficult at times, we have now set up a private Youtube channel to enable us to send a link to parents of anything we produce. Parents are sometimes limited to what they can send us due to file size especially when sending by email. Those who have access to “mail drop” have been more successful but not all parents know how to use this.</p>	<p>Seesaw, once we have it, will hopefully, allow us to share videos with parents and for them to share videos back.</p>
<p>Raffle – Christmas time</p>	<p>Every year we usually have a fete or similar at Christmas time to bring our families together. As we were unable</p>	<p>We discussed this and thought that our next raffle could be held during a TEAMS tea/coffee</p>



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<p>Christmas Activities – online extravaganza; virtual Santa visit, presents, letters to Santa,</p> <p>Intergenerational Project – Christmas presents for the residents of our local nursery home</p>	<p>to do this, we collected prizes for friends and our own families to hold a Christmas raffle. Monies raised paid for a socially distanced party and presents for the children. Nearly all parents bought raffle tickets and we ended up with over twenty prizes.</p> <p>Children were photographed completing their Christmas activities, and filmed singing Christmas songs and dressing up. This was put together to make a video shared with parents. We held a Christmas party where Santa appeared via video link with a message. He had left presents earlier, and thanked the children for their letters. Virtual Santa was a success as usually some children are intimidated by him in real life – this year there were no tears! It was not quite the same and they did not get a photograph with the big man!</p> <p>Prior to lockdown we worked with a local residential home (see IiF Action 3:1). During lockdown, we have continued to email. Our families contributed chocolates and hand cream (items requested by the Home) in order to make a gift bag for each resident for Christmas. The children printed their own wrapping paper and made each resident a card. They helped wrap the items and filled the bags. There were enough items left over to make a hamper for the staff. The only barrier was the fact the children could not deliver the items themselves however we did show them photographs of the delivery.</p>	<p>morning. We would invite families to prepare their own tea/drink and biscuits and join us for a social chit chat, and draw the raffle “live”. We plan to do this at key points throughout the term with perhaps a free raffle offering one or two prizes to engage the families.</p> <p>If restrictions allowed we would have liked to have taken the children to hand deliver the presents to each resident.</p>
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Home Learning

How did you support Home learning?	What platforms did you use?	Frequency of Home Learning
<p>Learning Menus – blended/distance learning grid with activities/experiences around a “theme”. Contains links to videos, etc. but not reliant on online learning to relieve the pressure on devices for older children or parents working from home</p>	<p>The “menu” is a pick and mix approach; the different activities are not reliant on each other in terms of skills or progression so are therefore suitable for all circumstances. Alternatives are offered when resources are needed, and all resources can usually be found within the home or garden. There are links to stories, songs, action videos etc. to engage, but also allow children to develop skills, knowledge and understanding through play-based activities. Feedback from families has been very positive from those that have engaged with the menu. Families have shared photographs and videos of how they have engaged with us. During wellbeing phone calls, some parents have reported that they are doing some of the activities but not sending in “evidence”. All parents have been reassured that the menus are there to help and are not meant to be rigid or constraining in anyway.</p> <p>Barriers – difficulties in sending in photographs or videos for some families; difficulties with internet or devices hence our non-reliance on “online”; time pressures on parents, particularly those working from home especially as the age</p>	<p>If timing had been different, we would have liked the opportunity to “launch” our blended/distance learning offer through workshops/interactive sessions with parents. We are pleased with the way the grids have evolved and the content they contain however we will be seeking feedback to improve on the menus should blended/distance learning continue</p>



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<p>Home school tasks – during wider reopening to engage families</p> <p>See also Maths Packs below</p>	<p>range of the children means they are unable to carry out most of the tasks independently.</p> <p>When schools were subject to wider reopening in between the two lockdowns, we returned to setting home/school tasks linked to our themes to engage our parents with learning. These included activities that enabled them to work together on a “learning task” e.g. collage faces, using recyclable paper and materials to represent their child. They were encouraged to discuss shape, texture, size etc. We often use recyclables to reduce the risk of anyone not having the right resources. Our presents to the children at key points of the year include stationery, and other resources to negate the impact of poverty.</p>	<p>Most families engage in these tasks, particularly as we talk about the completed task in circle times and display the finished articles for the children to see. Usually they are displayed where all families can celebrate them however currently parents are unable to access the areas where they are displayed due to COVID risk assessments</p>
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Health and Wellbeing

How did you promote Emotional Health and Wellbeing?	How was this monitored?	Is further work required in this area, what will you be doing?
<p>Regular contact with all families when closed to the majority of pupils</p> <p>Many of the families reported that they enjoyed us getting in touch. For some it was an opportunity to talk to someone and reassurance they had not been forgotten. On many</p>	<p>Family Support Worker logged phone calls and made brief notes of conversations. Notes are shared with senior leadership. Any concerns, queries, matters arising, were</p>	



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<p>occasions, the staff member was asked did they have time to speak to the child, which obviously they did. Although for the most part, parents reported they were fine and coping well, some sought the reassurance or advice of the staff member, particularly with regard to behaviours, sleep patterns, engagement in activities etc.</p> <p>Regular contact with families when open fully Due to social distancing, we are unable to stand at the door to talk to parents. It is also difficult to relay messages particularly of the more sensitive kind (child wet or displaying anti-social behavior etc.). To this end, we telephone when an incident or accident happens to ensure the parent is informed in a discreet and sensitive manner. A member of senior leadership is outside on arrival and pick up times with a note book and the name of anyone with a query or needing advice or information is telephoned rather than trying to observe social distancing and still be discreet or confidential with other parents around.</p> <p>Personal messages to children recorded by staff members These ensure children still see members of staff alongside the generic videos of staff reading stories and modelling activities.</p> <p>Provision of the hub for keyworker/vulnerable children Throughout both lockdowns when schools were not open to the wider school population, a hub has been available for children of key workers and those children deemed as</p>	<p>communicated immediately with SLT for action.</p> <p>Dealt with by senior leadership who are able to delegate if necessary and who have access to the right support as necessary. They are also able to monitor the number of incidences to ensure this is sustainable.</p> <p>Senior leaders responsible for approving all links sent out to families. Content scrutinized for suitability</p> <p>Headteacher, Senior Leader and Governor approved applications. Vulnerable pupils identified by staff</p>	
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<p>vulnerable. Numbers have been relatively small; however, this has been a lifeline for those parents who are working without support of family and for those families that are struggling to cope for whatever reason.</p> <p>Emotional Literacy Support Assistants Fairoak benefits from two fully trained and experienced Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs). They work with identified children to offer emotional and wellbeing support with targeted interventions and as part of day-to-day interactions. All staff are aware of the children being supported and a range of strategies employed by the ELSAs are used by all staff to ensure consistency of approach and to facilitate high levels of emotional wellbeing for all children.</p> <p>Recruit, Raise and Recover Grant Additional grant made available by Welsh Government to aid in the recovery from COVID. LSA employed to focus on Emotional Wellbeing and assisting children to be ready to learn. Working primarily on reducing the gap between where children would have been</p> <p>Wellbeing Circle Times and Activities Wellbeing and emotional literacy is central to all our work even when we are not coping with a pandemic. We strive to introduce the children to the vocabulary they will need to share and express their feelings, then start to build resilience by teaching them strategies to use. We aim to teach them that it is okay to have these feelings and that it is how we</p>	<p>members and then processed through matrix</p> <p>Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo), Class Teacher and Headteacher – monitors who is referred for targeted support, and plans for emotional literacy support for all pupils. ELSA supervision sessions take place by LA each half term</p> <p>The Headteacher and the Local Authority monitor this. Senior Leadership identifies children to receive additional support and FADE review is completed.</p> <p>Class teacher plans circle times and daily activities which are monitored by the Headteacher. The ALNCo monitors the work of the ELSAs and scrutinizes the Boxall to identify the strategies to be delivered either in circle times or by the</p>	
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<p>cope with them and deal with the more negative ones that is important. We use a range of circle times, activities and resources to support this including snippets of the film “Inside Out” to raise awareness and support discussion. Children are given time and the opportunity to come to terms with how they are feeling, then help to verbalise how they are feeling and what might help them to feel better. Many of our strategies help them to learn and play alongside each other, and teach them the skills they need to be more independent. Fostering their confidence and building their self-esteem are also important elements of this work. All children are assessed against the Foundation Phase outcomes for Personal, Social, Wellbeing and Cultural Diversity. Any child identified as needing extra support may access individual or small group support from the ELSAs and will have a Boxall Profile completed on them to identified more specific targeted activities to develop areas of weakness.</p> <p>Sharing of links to wellbeing websites and support</p> <p>Throughout the pandemic agencies such as the local Health Board and the Gwent Psychology Service have been sending information through to forward to parents. We have also used Twitter to share links to any advice or support we felt might be useful including wellbeing activities that a family can undertake together. Any posters offering support or advice for aspects of safeguarding including Domestic Abuse are shared either by email or displayed within the Nursery environment.</p>	<p>LSA employed from the Recruit, Raise, Recover Grant.</p> <p>The Headteacher or Senior Leadership approves all emails and tweets sent before circulating. Wherever, appropriate, we will highlight that it is being sent on behalf of, or that we have been asked to send it out, so that parents are aware that we are sending it for information and it is not necessarily a recommendation from us.</p>	
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Innovation

How else have you gone above and beyond to support your children and families?

Quarantined Cards

Local schools decided not to allow children to send actual Christmas Cards. Some allowed older children to design a card and send it virtually to their friends. Fair oak, however, came up with a way that allowed cards in line with the Health and Safety guidance from the Local Authority. Staff and children made a post box that stood in our under cover area in the garden area of the nursery. This was accessible to families when they were dropping off or collecting their child and allowed for social distancing. All cards needed to be posted by Friday 11th December at the latest. Using gloves to empty the post box, the cards were isolated for 72 hours in line with guidance. Cards were sorted into bags with each child's name on (again using gloves) and were then given out to the children to take home. We felt that as this was their first Christmas within a school environment that it was important that we spent the time and effort doing this for them.

Monitored emails

Senior leadership ensured that emails were monitored at least once in every twenty-four hour period including weekends and holidays in order to give a timely response to families. Often, the response was not urgent but it reassured parents that we were contactable and stopped them from feeling unnecessarily anxious about something when previously they may have had to wait for usual school hours. If necessary, a telephone call was made if staff felt a more personal response was warranted.

Phone calls within sessions for wellbeing - to update with regard to incident/accident etc.

As parents have to socially distance for drop offs and pickups, it is difficult to have a conversation with them as other parents are waiting and within ear shot if a confidential or sensitive message needs to be relayed. Therefore, we now telephone the parents during the session to relay messages wherever possible. This reduces waiting time and protects a family's right to privacy.

Maths Packs

As a school, we have always supported Pori Dwry Stori, a home-school partnership project around Rhymes and Books. We decided that we would invest in a similar "pack" concentrating on the basic math's skills children would need transitioning from the summer term in Nursery into Reception in the Autumn. To this end, we purchased and made different resources that would focus around six different numerical/mathematical skills. The idea originally, was to provide one resource with a several different activities each week. This would have been for six weeks building

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into a resource pack to be used to practice skills during the last few weeks of Nursery, through the summer holiday and then into the new term in Reception. The pack contained number dice, spotted dice, number fans, number lines, bead strings and a number wheel with a host of supporting activities. As we were in lockdown, we still distributed the pack, asking parents to pick up the pack from the nursery on their daily exercise. No one was disadvantaged as on request staff delivered packs on their way home to anyone housebound.