



Heath Lane Nursery School  
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Telephone (01442) 255418  
Email [admin@heathlane.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@heathlane.herts.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Mrs Hayley Yendell

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25<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

What an incredibly challenging and difficult time we find ourselves in. Government guidance is significantly changing on a daily basis and the rapidly changing landscape has made it incredibly difficult to plan ahead, plan staffing and keep you informed. However, I will endeavour to keep you updated and keep in touch.

### **Thanks to staff**

Firstly, I want to start by saying an enormous thank you to the staff at Heath Lane for everything they have done and will be doing in the coming weeks/months. As critical workers some have been working remotely from home to ensure that communication with you can continue. Others have been required to contribute to this unprecedented national effort by coming into school and caring for the children of other critical workers.

In doing this they cannot stay home and stay safe. Instead they are risking far greater exposure to the virus to support the necessary fight against COVID-19. Staff have been asked to do different tasks than they usually do, work different hours or days and be willing to offer help at short notice. I have been blown away by the positive response to this and the desire to follow government directives to support our children.

Some staff have been identified as vulnerable and at greater risk. Others have displayed symptoms resulting in them needing to stay home and follow stringent self-isolation rules to protect themselves, their family, their colleagues and the children at the school. Knowing how committed every member of staff is I know that they have found this frustrating and difficult. I can inform you that all have kept in touch, offered to work from home and have provided words of encouragement for those in school.

The staff in school have been providing as much normality as possible for our children at an unprecedented time that none of us have experienced in our lifetime and hopefully never will again. As adults, whilst bewildered, we are able to understand reports and broadcasts but imagine being a three, four, five year old! Staff have provided a safe place to play, relax and have fun whilst the children's critical worker parents are carrying out work vital to the national effort.

### **Thanks to parents**

There has been a lot of coverage in the press about schools struggling to minimise the number of parents requesting a critical worker school place due to wanting unnecessary childcare. I feel so blessed and proud to share with you that the complete opposite has happened at Heath Lane; parents have been incredibly thoughtful, courteous and mindful not to send their children in unless it is absolutely vital.



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We have received many messages of thanks and support and were particularly touched by the thoughtful gifts of muffins and toilet roll from critical worker parents this week. Do contact us if you are a critical worker and need childcare in the coming weeks; we know that shift patterns are changing, annual leave is being cancelled and family needs are changing fast. E-mail us at [admin@heathlane.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@heathlane.herts.sch.uk)

I am aware that in these challenging times some of you might be emotionally or physically isolated. If you ever need to just hear a friendly voice, please e-mail with your phone number and one of the team will be in touch. E-mails are checked regularly and one of us will always be happy to pick up the phone.

### **Thanks to the children**

Finally, I would like to thank the children. Firstly, those at home adapting to the significant change from being at school for significant parts of the week to staying at home. For those who have had a go at home learning challenges and those who have settled into a new way of life, missing their routine, but accepting their new normality.

And lastly I would like to thank the children of critical workers who have come into school and have found their world so altered. They have perhaps been one of 2 children rather than one of fifty. They have been so incredibly resilient, curious, innocent and funny they have reminded us that it might be stormy now but it can't rain forever.

From the bottom of my heart I want to thank you all xx

With kind regards,

Hayley Yendell

Headteacher