



# FAMILY NEWSLETTER

12<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents & Carers,

Next week is the February half term holiday and school will be closed. We re-open to all our pupils on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021. When we return, our school day will run from 9 am - 3 pm, Monday to Friday until Easter. The Transport Department has been informed of the 3 pm finish on a Friday.

**Covid-19 Email Address** – Please continue to use the [covid19@learntolivefederation.co.uk](mailto:covid19@learntolivefederation.co.uk) email address to inform us of any updates or results of Covid tests. This inbox will be closely monitored in the 48 hours after the school closes today, in case we need to advise families of a positive case. After this, the inbox will continue to be monitored periodically until the school re-opens.

**Vaccinations** – To help prioritise your family to receive a Covid-19 vaccination, we have been informed you should speak to your GP and ensure your patient records state you are a parent/carer of a child with additional needs, especially if your child is classed as extremely clinically vulnerable. Here is some advice we have been given which might be helpful to you. This information has been provided by a parent:

## What to do if your GP says you aren't eligible for the Covid-19 vaccine

As most of you will know, unpaid carers are now included in Priority Group 6 for the Covid-19 vaccine, alongside adults who are part of an at-risk group. After a lot of campaigning, the government added unpaid carers to this group on 30<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

Personal Assistants employed by families with personal health budgets or social care direct payments have been included in priority group 2 (alongside other care staff).

If your GP is unaware of this, or insists that you are not eligible for the vaccine despite being a carer, here's what you can do:

1. *Email your GP a copy of government guidance* - Guidance clearly states that group 6 includes those who are in receipt of Carer's Allowance **OR** those who are the main carer of a person (adult or child) whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.  
See page 10: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/.../Greenbook...>
2. *Let your GP know you are a carer and ask if this could be registered on your medical record* - All GP practices will have a carer registration form. Parents should ask for their GP to mark their record with a 'carers flag', otherwise you may not get an invitation when your turn arrives. You can request a 'carers flag' regardless of the Covid-19 vaccine, as it is used for other services as well. You don't even have to mention the Covid vaccine when requesting this, if you don't want to!

If you are having a difficult time getting this done, we would recommend persisting or asking a different member of staff. We have heard reports from parents who didn't get anywhere with the first person they spoke to, but then gently persisted and were put in touch with a better-informed member of the surgery who helped them.

3. *Bookmark the Vaccine FAQ* - This page is updated every time new information comes out or whenever direct communication from the government is received. Let this be your Covid-19 vaccine bible: <https://contact.org.uk/.../covid-vaccination-your.../>

The government has assured that work is taking place to identify all unpaid carers so that they can be vaccinated in line with JCVI advice.

Timescales for vaccinating unpaid carers are still unclear. The government has been asked to clarify when unpaid carers can expect to be offered the vaccine.

When your turn comes, you will most likely be invited by letter for the vaccine. Wait for your invitation from the NHS. Your GP, hospital, or care home will contact you. You do not need to contact them. People will be vaccinated in one of seven mass vaccination hubs set up across the country or in GP surgeries, pharmacies or hospitals.

*We know this is a difficult time for carers, and waiting for clarity from government and GPs can make everything even more stressful. If you feel overwhelmed or exhausted, need practical advice and emotional reassurance, or could just do with a bit of support, book a free and confidential Listening Ear appointment with one of the family advisers here:*

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/.../contact-for-families...>

**Goodbye** – Today, we say “goodbye” and “good luck” to our Early Years Teacher, Brenda Glanville. Brenda joined Bidwell Brook in January 2001 and started her teaching career with us in May 2012. She has worked with many of our Bidwell Brook pupils as they have moved through the Early Years Department and it will be very sad to see her leave us today. Brenda is not going too far – she has accepted a role as an Early Years Advisory teacher for the Complex needs team at Lescaze. We wish her well in the future.

**Message from Sarah Kershaw, Finance - Spring Term School Meals Charges** - Please find below the cost of school meals for the second half of the Spring Term 2021. You are able to pay either by cash, cheque or online [www.schoolgateway.com](http://www.schoolgateway.com)

	<b>Junior</b>	<b>Senior</b>
Daily	£2.40	£2.50
Weekly	£12.00	£12.50
2nd Half Term (29 Days)	£69.60	£72.50

For information – all schools meals are payable **in advance**. Please send your payment in with the orange payment card. Alternatively, please pay online at [www.schoolgateway.com](http://www.schoolgateway.com) Cheques to be made payable to “Devon County Council”.

**Cookery Contributions** – The cost for cookery for the second half term is £7.50. Payments can be sent in by cheque made payable to “Devon County Council” or online at [www.schoolgateway.com](http://www.schoolgateway.com)

If you have any queries regarding school meals or cookery contributions, please do not hesitate in contacting me on 01803 864120. Thank you, Sarah Kershaw.

**School Uniform** – If you would like to purchase Bidwell Brook school uniform, please contact our supplier, Riviera Schooldays. Their website is [www.rivieraschooldays.co.uk](http://www.rivieraschooldays.co.uk)



**Dartington Recreation Association** – The DRA is keen for Bidwell Brook families to sign up to their Facebook page, so you can have an input on any developments or changes the DRA is considering in the local area. Here’s the link if you would “like” to find out more:

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=2829784610610011&id=1737493399839143](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2829784610610011&id=1737493399839143)

**YMCA** – The YMCA is running a virtual sleepover event on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021. The emphasis is not so much on fundraising but rather offering an opportunity for families and children to do a fun activity during the lockdown period. To find out more, check out their website:

[Stay in for Sleep Easy - The Big Virtual Sleepover 2021 - YMCA Exeter](#)



I hope you enjoy the half term holiday.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jacqui Warne'.

**Jacqui Warne**  
**Executive Head**