CRESWELL C.E. INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Gypsy Lane,

Creswell,

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Telephone 01909 721471

# Headteacher: Mrs Amanda Dodd

 **Deputy Head: Mrs Samantha Cardwell**

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Dear Parents and Carers of children eligible for free school meals,

I hope you and your family are safe and well. I am writing to you today, with an update to our provision.

As discussed previously, at the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic schools across the country had to use their own judgement and creativity to ensure the children within their schools received the meals they were entitled to. In March (and throughout the Easter break) the government were establishing their response and so advised schools to take appropriate measures to ensure our children received a free lunch each day. As you know, for the first week of our closure we enlisted the help of the Little Tea Rooms, in Creswell, and from the second week we were able to offer parents the choice of either a Co-op voucher, in order to purchase their own choice of food, or to continue using the Little Tea Rooms.

Creswell Junior and Creswell Infants School have worked collaboratively and tirelessly throughout this crisis to ensure our families receive the care and attention they deserve. We have held multiple meetings over the past couple of weeks to formulate a plan, moving forward, which we feel will be most appropriate for you. The government launched a national voucher scheme, in April, which worked with Tesco, Morrisons, Sainsburys, Aldi and Asda to supply online vouchers to parents. The scheme has had significant teething problems; there have been delays in parents receiving vouchers, the company administrating the scheme are very difficult to contact and occasionally the vouchers have not worked. Both schools are mindful of the impact a delay may have and are also concerned that parents will have to travel to Clowne to the nearest supermarket (you are able to order online but there is a minimum order value). Having considered all our options, we have taken the decision to continue offering Co-op vouchers to our families for the remaining summer term. It is important you know that this decision could have a considerable impact on our school budgets as, at the moment, there is no guarantee that the money we have spent, thus far, on meals for our children will be reimbursed. However, both schools feel we need to make a decision which is in the best interests of our families.

Both schools would also like to take this opportunity to thank Verity Bluff, the owner of The Little Tea Rooms, for agreeing to support us and our families throughout the pandemic. She has produced the most amazing meals for our children and I know the feedback we have had has been overwhelmingly positive. We feel incredibly fortunate to have had such a wonderful service across the road. Verity now needs to take a short break and prepare to reopen her business, once restrictions are lifted.

If you have been using The Little Tea Rooms we will contact you on Monday 1st June to explain how we administrate the vouchers and answer any questions.

Free school meal allowances have now reverted back to term time only (please see Providing free school meals during the Coronavirus outbreak, updated 15th May 2020); unusually, the government had asked schools to support families, from their own budgets, over the Easter break, in order to alleviate additional pressures.

As always, if you need help, support or advice please contact me in the usual way. Our team are all committed to helping our families through this challenging time.

Stay safe.

Kind regards,

Amanda Dodd

Headteacher