



12<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear parents/carers,

We are all continuing to do our best in this very different and difficult time. I want to thank everyone for persevering and engaging with the remote learning offer and for supporting each other with advice about uploading to assignments and how to access sound etc. We know that it is extremely challenging, especially for parents who are also working from home or in families where there are a number of children trying to learn. As we are all discovering, both at home and at school, our technical know-how is being tested and we are certainly experiencing a surge in tech knowledge!

I wanted to explain that the Department for Education's national expectation for remote learning during this lockdown is different to the experiences in the summer term, with the expectation on schools to deliver a well-sequenced curriculum with knowledge and skills built incrementally so that the children continue to progress.

#### **Timings and Tasks:**

When teaching remotely, we are expected to provide teaching that is equivalent in length to the core teaching that children would receive in school, and that this is a minimum of 3 hours for Reception and KS1 children and 4 hours for children in Years 3 to 6.

The tasks are a mixture of on-line and digital and paper and pencil tasks too. Again, we ask you to contact us if you are having issues accessing the work on devices at home, as we can loan out equipment to support. For us, it is our responsibility to ensure that the work we upload is of value and will build on learning. The work at home is not different to the work offered in school and it is important to access the tasks and lesson in order: mainly Monday to Friday, so that the children receive the progression they need. If a child misses a session say in Maths one day, then please complete this session before accessing the sessions the days after.

We understand the additional constraints of time or supporting more than one child at home and would suggest setting up a routine each day, after accessing the timetable, and see what each child has to complete. This way, devices can be used efficiently and this should maintain children's attention. Any live lessons can be accessed later in the day as they will be recorded and uploaded. We are also providing a range of activities so that the screen time is reduced where possible.

We very much want to keep you involved in our plans, so later this week we will be sending out the class letters for the spring term. We hope these support you to see the overview of learning for the half term and beyond.



**Love learning, work together, achieve and shine.**

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### **Support and Expectations:**

I have once again attached our remote learning document and in the coming days will be sending out guidance and protocol for live lessons too, but our main concern is to keep everyone safe by having key rules such as joining with the camera and microphone switched off and only staying on-line when the teacher is present.

To engage with the children, we will operate a check-in system whereby we will telephone any families who request support or who we have noticed may need help. Children will also receive feedback on assignment work and may be asked to comment on the task to explain that they had completed the work. We ask that work uploaded to an assignment is the work requested. Thank you. It would also be useful to let us know if you are unable to upload work.

I have arranged for a Teams Q&A session next Tuesday morning with our IT Technician. This will be a session where you can drop in and ask questions or gain information and training. It might be useful to send in your questions too and we will try and trouble-shoot issues with advice as and when they arise.

The challenges of our present situation are vast and I want to say that we fully appreciate everything you are doing at home. I am aware that many of us are 'spinning plates' at the moment with changes to our working lives, additional family pressures and regard for keeping our wider community safe.

### **Access to places at school:**

I'm sure you will have seen much discussion in the press over the last few days about the large numbers of pupils who are currently attending school, even though we have supposedly moved to remote learning for the vast majority of children.

There are a number of reasons for this huge increase across the country. The government has redefined the critical worker status, removed the 20% cap on school places available, ended furlough for many businesses, removed the bubble element of school provision during lockdown, and added more categories of pupils for whom places could be requested. This is in stark contrast with the stay-at-home message given on 4th January. In response to the concerns raised by headteachers, scientists and politicians about the role of schools in community transmission, and also the increasingly high levels of infection in secondary and primary school prior to Christmas, the DfE amended its guidance at the end of last week.

On Thursday the 'Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools' document was amended, and on Friday the 'Children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools of educational settings' document was amended, both with addendums stating that parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can. In the spirit of this guidance and the continued increase in cases, we are asking that all parents who have requested places, or are considering requesting places under the umbrella of critical worker status, do so only on those days when their child **cannot** be at home.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any queries or questions.

Kind regards



Tracey Hart  
Headteacher

