



Loving, Learning, Living

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Dear Parents and Carers

Firstly, I would like to thank you for all your support and patience as we have all readjusted to the many challenges of another lock down. Despite being a sadly familiar routine there have still been new systems and ways of working to establish, but as always I have been so impressed by how well the children have coped with the changes to their learning in school and at home.

In school, as you may know, we have 2 mixed age bubbles staffed by a weekly rota of teachers and TAs. All children will be familiar with the people in their bubble even if they are not their usual class teacher or TA. So far, this seems to be working well and children have enjoyed working with children from other classes and accessing online learning in school with the rest of their usual cohort who are working from home. We have managed to keep our kitchen open in school and so there are hot meals being served every day - these are very welcome as I would be lying if I said it is warm in school at the moment. We are all wearing our thermals and many layers as current health and safety guidance means we have to ensure all rooms are ventilated and we cannot have any fan heaters on. As usual the children seem completely unphased by this - but in nearly 10 years of us working together, I think this is the first time I have seen Mrs Dixon wearing a coat!!

For those children working entirely from home, I know this is a really challenging time for both for them and you. Staff have worked incredibly hard to ensure that what is available is as accessible and engaging as possible. For years 1-6 there are opportunities to meet with the teachers and 'teaching videos' in google classrooms. Wherever possible, work is planned to individual needs and daily feedback is given through email and the private messaging - the staff are particularly pleased with their new discovery of voice notes which have been a big hit with the children as they get to hear their teacher talking directly to them.

If at any time your child is finding any element of their remote work difficult please do not hesitate to contact staff, all emails and private comments are monitored systematically to ensure a quick response. Also remember that although we are required to set work each day for your

children, we also understand that there are days, when for many reasons, work may not be fully completed or you choose to do something else that suits your family - this is absolutely not a problem. At no time do we want to add any more stress to your lives and we know sometimes having a break away from the task or doing something entirely different is the best strategy for everyone!

As I mentioned, each week staff will be hosting live sessions for children at home (frustratingly the local authority's broadband will not support multiple devices to allow children in school to access these from school). These are a great opportunity for children at home who do not see their teachers in school at the moment to connect with staff and for staff to check in on how everything is going. To safeguard both children and staff we ask that all children have an adult present in the room for the duration of the call, unfortunately children attending without an adult will be unable to stay on the call. Thank you for your support with this.

For convenience, you may also find it useful to download the Google Classroom app for your own phone or device and sign in as your child; the app is not the easiest way for the children to complete their work, but it is handy for you as parents to get an overview of things.

And finally, there are not so many fun tasks for a head teacher at the moment, but I do have the pleasure and privilege of monitoring all the work that is assigned and turned in on all the google classrooms and uploaded on the website. This allows me to feel more connected to all the children as I can see all the amazing work that they have been producing with your help at home.

This week I have loved seeing all the terrible woodland creatures the Explorers' class have made - far more scary than the Gruffalo! There are also some budding master chefs in this group - their baking looked so delicious. I, like the children, am intrigued by the story the Adventurers are reading at the moment and wonder what might lie in store for the 'Thieves of Pudding Lane'. Also the children have demonstrated great historical knowledge through their model replica buildings and writing about London in 1666. The Voyagers are all now experts on the water cycle and produced amazing projects to showcase their understanding. They are loving, as am I, their class book 'The song of the Dolphin boy' and have produced some great explanation texts about solids, liquids and gas. The Pioneers have battled successfully with equivalent fractions, alongside indoor cricket sessions, mapping the village and exploring and writing about their latest novel 'The one thousand year boy'

Not bad going for the first full week of remote learning!

Very best wishes

Suzanne Connolly