

Tuesday, 31st March

Education During the COVID – 19 Crisis

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

Teaching and parenting are difficult enough on their own. When you combine them, you open the door to a world of difficulty that can have a negative impact on home and family life. This is no longer education as we know. School has been cancelled and we are all now expected to be at home and 'teach' our children and be 'good' parents too. This will not be an easy task.

The Department For Education understands that these are extraordinary times. The most important thing is that children of critical workers are supervised and cared for at education settings. Emergency legislation has lifted curriculum requirements for schools, giving flexibility to provide support, activities and education in the way they see fit.

Presently in school we have a small number of children who are not following a normal timetable – with lessons and homework. The main focus, in this short-term, is to ensure that those children are safe and supported as they complete a variety of tasks such as cooking, sewing, music etc and of course Joe Wicks to start the school day. This is something that you too can be doing at home with your children, as they complete their 'work-packs'.

Teachers are now putting in place processes and resources to support your children's learning for after the Easter holidays. However, this will not replicate a whole school experience and provide a 'normal' education. There are no plans to use Zoom or other conferencing tools. As we prepare for this as teachers, we are mindful of the very different home circumstances of our children - some have lots of parental support and engagement, others have less so. We are mindful of pressures on families in the current circumstances especially as many have children who need to share devices. Families will need flexibility in terms of the times they access online learning tools especially as whole families are working from home and demand for devices is high. Children's level of independence will also be a factor; this is especially true of our youngest children who will need more interactive activities games and challenges as their learning is less formalised.

We also need to be mindful that school staff have the same demands and pressures as you. Many have young families of their own to look after, as well as providing resources for you to use at home and others are here at school providing support for families of key workers on a daily basis.

After the Easter holidays EYFS teachers will be sending out weekly activities on Sunday evenings with the idea that children try to complete at least 2 activities per day. In Reception some of the activities can be completed online. The children will also be encouraged to at least read, practise their phonics and go on Mathematics as much as possible. These activities can all be done easily online.

For the rest of the school, teachers are also planning work for use after the Easter holidays. Teachers will communicate with parents regularly and provide activities with the aim of supporting parents in the education of their child at home. They will use a variety of resources with a focus on English and maths but also incorporate science, topic and RE activities. Children will also be able to log on to a music resource so that they have access to music learning at home as well. The types of resources will also evolve over the coming weeks.

The Covid 19 crisis means that teachers and support staff are now working in new situations and new ways. All schools are now supporting parents at home and will approach this differently. Hopefully this new way of working will bring out the best in us. We will need to support each other during this time. Success will be borne out of mutual respect for each other and an understanding about what we need to do to make sure as a school and as parents we continue to facilitate the children's learning.

Kind regards,

Mrs J Connery
Co-Headteacher

Mr R. Coyle
Co-Headteacher