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HOME LEARNING: APRIL UPDATE

Dear Parents and Carers

We have been recently contacted by a number of families regarding learning at home. As you know, before the Easter holidays, we provided families with lots of direction and information linked to online learning (including the websites/services we regularly use in school with your children). In addition to this, I know teachers have been in touch with families, through Class Dojo, to provide further advice, feedback and support. So, what next...?

We are now half-way through the Easter holidays and it's important that children and staff have a break. In light of this, I am not expecting staff to be in touch with families until Tuesday 14th April. On that day, teachers will provide families (through Class Dojo) with appropriate learning tasks that are linked to the learning/topics for week 1 of the summer term. This will include English, Maths and 'Discovery' activities, and are likely to include a range of written and practical tasks.

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions):

1. **Are pages and pages of printed worksheets/workbooks a good idea?** Anything that helps your child consolidate their learning will be helpful, but too much of anything can have a negative impact. It's also important to note that if your child is doing something wrong/with little understanding, then to repeat the same mistake again and again will definitely not be good for them. The mantra, 'little and often' may be useful as a guide.
2. **Will my child's teacher look at work my child has completed?** If you post something on to class Dojo, then teachers will look at it and may provide feedback about it, if appropriate. Work should only be posted on your child's portfolio (NOT through 'Messages') as this will enable your child's teacher to file it as evidence of learning. However, please don't just post every picture and written activity on to Class Dojo, just to prove that your child is doing something. It's about quality not quantity.
3. **Do I have to do everything/go on every website link that my school/child's teacher has sent home?** No. Whilst at home, you decide how much is appropriate for your child. However, after the Easter holidays, the activities will be linked to the learning that your child would normally be doing in school at that time. Once they return to school, it's unlikely that there will be enough time to repeat/go over much of this learning, and therefore, it is important that your child does complete this learning (to ensure there aren't gaps in their learning and don't fall behind).
4. **Someone in my child's class has everything done and we've barely started. Will they fall behind?** See question 3. It's not a competition. Each child will have different learning needs and will learn at a different pace. You know your child best. However, please ask your child's teacher for strategies to support them if you feel they are struggling with a particular aspect of learning.

5. **I'm not doing any work with my child(ren). All they're doing is building Lego, cooking and playing outside. Is this okay?** All of this is learning - very valuable learning. This should be a regular and frequent part of their learning at home, but there should be a balance of school-based work too. During the holidays, the normal expectation would be that pupils still READ daily. After the holidays, your child would normally be spending more than 6 hours a day in school, and therefore, it's important that you ensure your child engages with some of the learning provided by school.
6. **How can I get three different lots of work done with three children of different ages?** You can't, stop trying. If they're old enough, try to get them to do little bits independently. Otherwise try to do something that they can all engage with, reading a story together, some free writing or baking etc. Our children are used to working independently at various points throughout the school day, so please continue to promote and enforce this.
7. **So, what if I can't get my child to engage with the school learning?** If this is proving too difficult or you feel your child needs a break from these tasks, then there are a number of activities they can do:
 - Reading (independent, to them or via audiobook etc.)
 - Free writing (diary, story, poster or comic, etc.)
 - Practical hands-on maths (via cooking, cleaning, outside or some maths games, physical or digital).
 - Some fine motor work (Lego, cutting, playdough, tidying up small toys).
 - Physical exercise everyday (Joe Wicks daily exercise).
 - Creative activities like painting, drawing, doodling, and making music.
 - Research projects of their own choice.
 - If younger, lots of imaginative free play, the more independent the better.
 - Your child's class teacher is quite happy to reinforce and support you in instructing your child to complete school learning (initially through Class Dojo).

Please also note the following:

- 1) The current situation is not home-schooling (or Elective Home Education). This is an unprecedented emergency situation. Home-schooling is a choice, when parents make a considered and planned decision, and when you are your child's school teacher. We would, at best, probably describe the current situation as distance learning.
- 2) All schools are trying to identify the best solutions for their families, which is particularly challenging when everyone wants something different! It is clearly NOT possible to 'continue to plan lessons as normal and just send them home' – if it were, we'd all be out of a job!
- 3) You are doing enough. You are supporting your child(ren) through extremely challenging and unprecedented times. Please continue to look after yourself and each other, mentally and physically. Minimising stress is absolutely vital in a time like this for mental health. Don't let this be something that stresses you.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding at this time.

Yours sincerely

Mr C Watson
Headteacher