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25th April 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Thank you so much to all the families who completed the questionnaire sent out by Mrs Harrison at the end of last week. We know how busy you all are, so really appreciated the time and effort you spent sending us your thoughts on how home learning has gone for you in the last few weeks since school closures. Communication during this time is the ultimate key to our success as a school community so we value each and every response, thank you.

I am thrilled that the response to home learning has been overwhelmingly positive. Our teachers have been working tirelessly behind the scenes. Like you, we have been thrown into this situation virtually overnight and have had to make some tough decisions about what we think is best for the vast majority of the school community, knowing that in these circumstances we will never be able to account for every possible scenario or home situation. Thank you so much to all the families who have acknowledged this and to the many who thanked our teachers for their hard work.

There were some comments shared via the questionnaire which we will definitely take on board and endeavour to adapt things as much as possible to continue to support you. This week, we have taken off the suggested timings from the plans as it seems that for some, this became something to compare yourselves negatively against if activities took longer in your house. If you found them useful, please look at plans from previous weeks and note down the suggestions, they will stay fairly consistent from now on. We are always really conscious of printer and screen use and our teachers are continuing to adapt plans as much as possible to ensure a balance of screen, independent, project based and focussed tasks. We always have an alternative available for those without a printer, this is never a prerequisite for being able to complete the tasks. Furthermore on this note, please take our reassurance again that if you do not complete all the tasks set, or if you choose to do something different because that is what suits your family on that particular day, you are not going to get in trouble and neither is your child! The teachers still love to see what you get up to together, so a quick photo post on Seesaw is really well received, even if the activity is not school set.

A number of requests and questions were also raised in the survey and I wanted to take this opportunity to reassure or clarify our reasons.

We would really like the teachers to provide a Zoom call every day to teach the children at least one lesson.

Unfortunately, this is simply not possible. We know how beneficial it is to the children's morale to see each other and their teachers, hence why we are trying to provide Zoom calls and Seesaw videos where possible. However, this will never be able to replicate the teaching that occurs in a classroom. The majority of our teachers, like you, have children at home with them and so will often pre-record their videos at a time that fits in with their other commitments. To schedule and stick to daily lessons would be impossible and it would be a concern for our pupils to have something promised to them that cannot necessarily be stuck to. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.



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Using the Seesaw app is annoying when you have to log out one child in order to post to another child's journal. We agree! Unfortunately, this is something beyond our control and is down to the app developers. We will let you know if this changes at any point but Seesaw is still by far the most useful and safest platform for sharing work that we know.

Why don't teachers 'mark' every piece of work on Seesaw like you would in school? Teachers are very conscious that, in school, we are able to explain our marking to a child and sit with them to edit and improve where necessary. Children respond really well to making improvements with the help of their teacher but this is very difficult to convey via a faceless written comment. Furthermore, we know how much of a struggle some days at home are – for you and for them – so we feel that on the whole, positive encouragement- based comments will help spur them on most effectively. On some occasions, if you post several pictures, it might be that a teacher simply 'likes' and approves the post and will comment on a longer piece of work or video explanation. This is because that on average we received between 80-100 notifications of work a day and therefore prioritise those pieces of work which may need support to edit and improve or have clearly taken the child a great deal of effort and time. This may also be done through video replies and using the 'send back' button, which many teachers are starting to make use of now home learning is more established.

We prefer topic based learning / We prefer whole school themed weeks. Excellent! There is something for everyone! As explained in last week's letter, we know that different children and families will learn and thrive with different tasks. We thought that starting the term with a more relaxed theme based week would help and will spend upcoming weeks on Year group topic based learning before we embark on a different one-off theme week. It's important to us that where possible we are able to accommodate both.

I hope the above has helped to provide some transparency and clarity behind some of the decisions we have made over the last few weeks. As mentioned above, communication is vital for us all to be able to work together, so as always please do contact me on the email address below if you have any further questions or suggestions for our home learning provision.

I wish you all the very best for another week!

Kind regards,



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