



Newsletter

Friday 3rd April 2020

Dear Parents,

Lots of people are feeling stressed, overwhelmed and under pressure by everything that's happening. This may include the work being sent home for your child. I wanted to just give my perspective on it all as a Headteacher and I hope this can help with that somewhat.

A few points to note first:

- 1) This is not home-schooling. This is an unprecedented emergency situation impacting on the whole world. Let's keep perspective. Home-schooling is a choice, where you considered, you plan for it and you are your child's school teacher in whatever form you choose. This is, at best, distance learning. In reality, it's everyone trying their best because none of us know what's right and wrong here.
- 2) You are, and always have been, your child's primary educator. If you decide that your child isn't going to engage with anything sent home and is going to spend the entire period playing in the dirt, or baking, or watching TV, then that is your choice. That is your right. There is nothing to stress or feel guilty about.
- 3) Schools don't have all the answers. These are unprecedented times. Schools had no notice, limited preparation time; we were NOT told to 'continue to plan lessons as normal and just send them home' – that's NOT possible. If it were, we'd all be out of a job!
- 4) It is incredibly difficult and challenging to facilitate distance learning with a primary aged child and work from home at the same time. The very idea is nonsense. If you're trying to do that, stop worrying now. Do what you can, keep your child busy as best you can, but your focus is your job, and survival. Again, unprecedented. Stop trying to be superheroes.

So, a few FAQs:

- My school has sent home lots of physical work. Pages and pages, hours and hours. How am I supposed to get through it all?!

Don't worry. It's not a competition, or a race. Do what you can.

My school keeps sending home links and emails with more work. How do I make it stop? Ahhhhhh!

See above. These are suggestions and ideas. Use them if they suit you, don't if they don't suit. If you're getting stressed, stop opening the emails. No one will know! Focus on the basics in maths, timetables, number bonds, reading and spelling. Do lots of practical things around the home – teach them to hold a knife and fork correctly, how to tie shoe laces, how to wash up and put things away carefully, play charades.

- Someone in my child's class has everything done and we've barely started. Will they fall behind?

Even if everything were equal in terms of support, time and number of children (which it's not) all children learn at different rates. In the class there's a wide range of levels in all subjects, there's different paces and there are many children working on differentiated levels of work. It's difficult for teachers to differentiate at the moment, so you don't worry.

Your child will not fall behind. This is mostly revision and reminder work. If children could all learn new concepts without specific teaching, we wouldn't need teachers. They will cover all of this again, multiple times.

- I'm not doing any work with my kids. All they're doing is building Lego, cooking and playing outside.

All of this is learning -very valuable learning. Give yourself and them a break.

- How can I get three different lots of work done with 3 different kids 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 they can all engage with, reading a story together, some free writing, baking etc. Share your time and model the value of fairness.

- So what's the bare minimum you'd expect?

For me, survival mode. Try to do what the teacher posts on their eschools page each week. If things get hard, or you feel unwell and stressed juggling working at home with 3+ children then try:

- A bit of reading every day (independent or to them or via audiobook etc)
- Some free writing. If they'll keep a diary or something, great. If not, would they draw a comic?
- Practical hands on maths. Be that 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
- Some art/music where possible through the week. Doesn't need to be guided.
- If old enough getting them to independently work on a project is great for keeping brains ticking over. Get them researching in a book or online and putting together something to present to you or family.
- If younger, lots of imaginative free play, the more independent the better.

You are doing enough. You are loving your kids and supporting them through a difficult time. Look after yourself. Minimising stress is absolutely vital in a time like this for mental health. Don't let this be something that stresses you. Only you can control that by accepting it is in your circle of control, you are the primary educator and this is all your call.

Easter News

Palm Sunday, Sunday 5th April, marks the start of Holy Week – a special week in the church calendar.

Holy Week

Towards the end of Lent we have Holy Week, starting with Palm Sunday:

On **Palm Sunday**, we celebrate Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem where he was welcomed by crowds worshipping him and laying down palm leaves before him. Beginning in the fourth century in Jerusalem, Palm Sunday was marked by a procession of the people carrying palm branches.

Holy Thursday is the day on which Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with his disciples. It is the day on which Catholics commemorate the institution of three pillars of the Catholic Faith: the sacrament of Holy Communion, the priesthood and the Mass. Near the end of the Last Supper, Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you: That you love one another, as I have loved you." The Latin word for "commandment," mandatum became the source for another name for Holy Thursday: Maundy Thursday

Good Friday commemorates the Passion and Death of Jesus on the Cross. Good Friday is the second of the three days of the Easter Triduum. From the earliest days of Christianity, no Mass has been celebrated on Good Friday; instead, the Church celebrates a special liturgy with bible readings and prayers and the congregation normally venerate the Cross by coming forward and kissing it.

Holy Saturday is the final day of Holy Week. The whole of Holy Saturday was originally a day of mourning for the crucified Christ and of expectation of His Resurrection. As on Good Friday, there is no Mass offered for Holy Saturday - the Easter Vigil Mass, which takes place after sundown on Holy Saturday, properly belongs to Easter Sunday.

Then comes the joy and celebration of **Easter Sunday** as Christians throughout the world celebrate Jesus' Resurrection from the dead –

"Alleluia, He is Risen!"

We give thanks for:

- The efforts of everyone battling against the Corona virus, especially those on the front line - thank you especially if that includes you!
- The continued efforts of all of our school staff to ensure our children continue to learn and be are being cared for.
- All those looking out for others and showing how much they care –shopping left on people's doorsteps, extra phone calls, prayers being offered

Please pray for:

- All those who are ill suffering as a result of the Corona virus
- Everyone who is ill at this time, with the Corona virus and also those with other illnesses. We pray for those whose treatment has been delayed because of the current situation
- All young families, everywhere – that they stay healthy in body, mind and spirit
- Peace and calmness in our homes, especially those of our school community

AMEN

Helpful Information:

The Government has updated it's document: Guidance: Closure of Educational Settings: Information for Parents and Carers.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

The change that has been made is actually very good.....It is the addition to Section 6, Resources and Support called, ***Where can I go to get support to help keep my child safe online?*** The guidance then provides the following useful links:

- Thinkyouknow (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online)
- Internet matters (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- Parent info (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- LGfL (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- Net-aware (support for parents and careers from the NSPCC)

Free Daily Resources For Children



PE with Joe Wicks On YouTube

Week days at 9am but you can visit any time on youtube to view the workout.

Wildlife With with Steve Backshall On Facebook

Every day at 9:30am for answering all your wildlife, biology, conservation, geography and exploration questions.



Science with Maddie Moate on YouTube

Weekdays 11am. Maddie & Greg chat about science and nature!

Dance with Oti Mabuse On Facebook

Every day at 11.30am but children can view the class at any time.



Maths With Carol Vorderman

Free access to the her maths website: www.themathsfactor.com

Music with Myleene Klass on YouTube

Twice a week. Next one Friday 27 March 10am, but can view any time.



Storytime With David Walliams

Free story everyday at 11am on his website: www.worldofdavidwalliams.com

Free

audio books

<https://stories.audible.com/start-listen>

Amazon Audio. You can listen to loads of books for free while schools are off. Apparently at 11am every morning David Walliams, is reciting a tale from World's Worst Children short story collections.

Finally,

Please try to ensure that you and your family have a rest over the Easter break.

During the school shut down, life is going to be very different and for some, very stressful. If things get worse, you will be stressed and your children will be stressed as they pick up on how we adults are feeling. They might be scared of things they've heard or seen on the TV. They are out of their normal routine and so, whilst we don't want our children forgetting everything they've been taught, they won't learn much if they are anxious.

During the Easter holidays, you won't be able to go out and do the things you normally do, so take the time to:

- Cuddle up together and read, read, read! Take turns reading. Read them your favourite novel – yes you can read novels to pre-school children.
- Do a puzzle
- Build a fort
- Bake
- Watch TV together

- Paint
- Get out the Lego and build together
- Set up a tent in your living room and camp out
- Look at photos of you when you were a child

Spend time together and remember, though this is a scary time, it could very well be a time they remember as the best time in their life!

Best wishes,

Sare Fickel

Headteacher