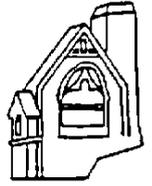




LIONEL WALDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL



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19th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Now that we are two weeks into this term of remote learning, I am writing on behalf of the staff to thank you for your patience and support as we have rolled out Teams across the school. The uptake by parents and pupils is excellent and we appreciate the commitment you have shown. We thank you for your feedback and hope that staff have managed to deal with your queries and provide helpful support during this initial period. Staff are keen to work with parents to ensure all children have access to appropriate resources to help them continue their learning. You will have seen in the media that schools were receiving devices to allocate to those pupils who required them - our allocation from the Department of Education was six laptops. However, we have also loaned some of the school's laptops and iPads to families who responded to our offer.

As you know, the expectation of remote learning this term is different to previously; it is more robust with government guidelines stating that in Key Stage 1 pupils should have access to three hours' work each day and four hours in Key Stage 2. We have been keen to achieve a careful balance between the expectations set out by the government and the individual needs of all our families. Learning from home is an entirely different experience for each family. We appreciate this and will continue to work with individual families as closely as possible during these difficult times. We understand the need for flexibility and do not want remote learning to cause undue anxiety or stress. Please continue to communicate directly with us so that we know if anything needs amending.

Each teacher is continuing to plan and upload assignments for their class. There will normally be a weekly timetable with English, Maths and one other subject per day. Reading, spelling practice and the rehearsal of multiplication tables (from Year 2 upwards) are also included. Should any parent or pupil wish to access further resources, then the Oak Academy and BBC Bitesize websites are excellent but there is no expectation to complete more.



Currently, we are providing a mix of online assignments, some of which include pre-recorded video clips of teaching input, together with clips of the teachers greeting their class and outlining the learning for the day ahead. Some classes are now having live reading sessions. Some parents have asked if it is possible to have live teaching each day. This has been considered very carefully and there are many reasons why pre-recorded lessons are better. Most children are sharing a device at home and would not be able to access live lessons when they are scheduled. Live lessons require sustained concentration from children and the teacher would not be able to interact in the same way with thirty children online as she would in the normal classroom environment. With pre-recorded lessons, children can watch, pause, rewind and watch again, if necessary, to embed the learning. Teachers are able to use their time more effectively to plan, record clips, look at work submitted and provide feedback. Many excellent online teaching clips are being utilised by staff and are added to the Class Page.

There may be some differences, at the moment, between what is offered to classes, often depending on the age of the pupils, but these will be developed over the coming weeks. Teachers are also providing feedback to pupils via Teams so that pupils know that their work is being looked at and valued. Staff are doing their best to respond regularly to all pupils but please bear in mind the amount of time this is taking on top of all other tasks. The feedback we have received from parents is that the children enjoy this form of communication. All other communication should be directed through the School Office, as normal, but as you will appreciate, it is better in these circumstances to have this contact with the teacher so that questions relating to specific work may be asked. Some teachers lead a chat session or question time through Teams so that pupils can ask for clarification or support with their work, if required. Pupils are having more contact with staff this time than in previous lockdowns and this is having a greater positive impact on their engagement. Schools are required to continue telephoning parents/carers at home. These calls to offer support are important but very time-consuming; the teachers are doing their best to contact everyone weekly but please email the School Office, if you would like a call any time sooner. Your child's mental health and wellbeing is very important to us. If there is anything you are concerned about, or would like more guidance with, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Keep up the excellent work!

Best wishes

S A Barnard-Taylor

Mrs S A Barnard-Taylor
Headteacher

