



Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to the end of another week of home learning. This week we finished on Thursday due to the National Bank Holiday, VE Day 75. The children have all been learning about VE Day and 37 people joined me live for a VE Day assembly yesterday. Thank you.

### **2020 Children's Book Week**

This week is National Children's Book Week. Teachers have been recording bedtime stories for the children on Google Classroom, and we have shared some of these on our social media. I hope you enjoyed them as much as the children and I hope you are all finding time to read to, and with your children.

### **Live lessons and Hangouts**

Several parents have asked what our plans are regarding live lessons. In truth, they are evolving as we develop our own knowledge and technical capabilities. However, I am happy that we are meeting the needs of our students by offering an increased provision of live learning opportunities, mixed with pre-recorded video lessons, interactive teaching resources (Jamboard, Slides etc.) and paper/physical resources.

Research tells us that young children do not benefit academically through working online with teachers in live classrooms on the screen. It does however tell us that there is a huge benefit to a child's wellbeing and pastoral needs, by seeing familiar people on screen. This is why we offer live Hangouts for every year group in school. I have been in some of these sessions and it has been equally lovely for me to see all of their smiling faces, together, yet separated. These sessions remind the children that their friends are going through a similar experience, and joins them during this potentially isolating time. Studies have shown that older children, as they become more independent and self-motivated, can use live online learning to help their studies. Nearly all academic research has solely included secondary schools and even they acknowledge the difficulties of learning live on the internet at a young age. However, as a school, we have deliberately increased the amount of online screen learning time children receive.

Our current provision is:

Reception - A weekly, whole class live Hangout aimed at the social and emotional wellbeing of the children. All other learning is through pre-recorded lessons and work aimed at supporting parents to support the children.

Year 1 - A weekly session, split into 3 groups for live chat, with elements of academic learning mixed with other formats. Plus small group sessions if needed.

Year 2 - 2 weekly sessions, split into 2 groups for live interaction and Maths and English support if required.

Year 3 - Daily support live online if needed.



Year 4 - A weekly, whole class live session plus daily small group support if needed.

Year 5 - Two daily live sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, children are expected to login to one of these. Support is given for Maths and English.

Year 6 - Daily, whole class, live sessions plus small group support in English and Maths when requested.

As you can see, the provision we can offer changes as children get older, but your teachers will do their very best to support you and your child. You are able to contact them, as can the children if they require support. Multiple teachers are now in each Google Classroom so there are opportunities for support from different adults. We will, of course, be keeping all of our plans under review and adapting if research changes, and as we learn.

Generally, discipline has been good online. We understand that the younger children require a lot more supervision and if possible, it's best if they have an adult with them throughout live sessions. Many of the older children are working independently. We would kindly ask that children do not join live sessions from their bedrooms, they should be in a supervised area of the house, dressed and with their camera switched on. This is to safeguard you, the children and the teachers in order to keep the Google Classrooms a safe place to contribute, socialise and learn together. We can't police all of your child's online behaviour, however we can encourage them to work sensibly and safely, and with your help we can give them opportunities not just in Maths and English but also in responsibility, independence, teamwork and discipline.

### **Returning to school**

I am regularly asked, "When will school reopen?"

I don't know! I eagerly await the Prime Minister's announcement on Sunday which may give us more answers but I would suggest it may be a few more weeks before children, other than Key Workers children, will be in school regularly. I believe school is a safe place for the children and it is also where they can be with their teachers and friends. However, this must only happen when it is safe to do so. As a school we will follow the Prime Minister's instructions. We will be told by the Department for Education and Public Health England what we can and can't do, and we will be guided by the Independent Schools Association and other advisory panels who will be making decisions nationally. We will follow all of this guidance and implement safe working practices to ensure every child is kept safe. Something we always do. We are a small school, on a large site, not in a city, so we do not have some of the concerns many others will have.

The sun is shining, I wish you all a lovely Bank Holiday weekend. I will be watching Winston Churchill and the Queen delivering their speeches and reminding myself how lucky I am that I remain healthy, positive and surrounded by a fantastic community.

Regards

Mr Thomas