

Fressingfield C of E Primary School

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6th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

School Closure – advice for successful home-schooling

It is with real sadness that I am writing to you once again with news that the school is closed to most children and to offer our advice for successful home-schooling. At the present time, we know that schools will be closed (except for the children of critical workers) until at least half-term – I hope for no longer. Suffice to say, we will follow all governmental advice and keep you informed of any changes as soon as we hear them.

We are, however, in a much better position than we found ourselves in March 2020: firstly, we have a great deal of experience of teaching remotely and will draw on the successes of the last lock-down; and we have also invested in Google Classrooms so we can continue with some face-to-face teaching every day.

The Department for Education guidance stipulates that primary schools provide ‘meaningful and ambitious’ work every day across a number of different subjects and that this should amount to at least 3 hours per day. This is similar to the provision we made across the school during the last lock-down. The expectation is that *all* pupils engage with the learning and we are required to follow up any pupils who are not sharing their work or taking part in the online sessions.

Starting from tomorrow – 6th January – we will be contacting those families who told us in the ICT survey that they had found it difficult to access digital learning due to a lack of facilities. We hope to be able to help.

We recognise that this has the potential to be stressful, and that many of you are balancing the requirements of working from home with those of supporting your children. Please know, we are on your side and are available to help in any way we can. If you have any questions, or need any additional support, please feel free to contact your child’s class teacher by email or via Tapestry (Waveney Class) during this period; they will endeavour to get back to you as soon as they can (but please respect the fact they may not be able to respond straight away).

In order to make a positive start, we make the following recommendations:

- Introduce a structure from the very start of this period and be explicit with your expectations. Try to maintain this throughout the school closure. Each class is sending a timetable which will be updated each week. If a structure is in place, your child should quickly get used to the routine.
- Start the day in the normal way: maintain your morning routines and try to get going by 9am.

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- Use a timer so that children know how long each task will take. Lessons in Key Stage 1 are about 40 minutes long and in KS2 they are about an hour, and this isn't an unreasonable time to stay focused.
- Have high expectations.
- Give positive feedback – and be specific about what you like (*“That’s a great sentence and you remembered your capital letter and full stop.” “That’s a really effective word choice.” “You set out your calculation really neatly with each digit in the right column.”*) and about what they could do next to improve their work (*“Have another look at this paragraph – I think it should be split into four sentences. Can you see where the full stops should go?”*). Use any marking schemes provided by your child’s teacher with your child and to go through it with them together.
- Have regular brain breaks and breaks for doing something physical.
- Each day your child’s teacher will set the following tasks:
 - Reading
 - Literacy (spelling, punctuation and grammar, or a creative writing task)
 - Maths
 - Another task linked to another area of the curriculum
 - These will be set by your child’s teacher. As far as is possible, we are aiming to teach following the curriculum as it would have been taught in school.
- Use the exercise book we are sending home to keep a record of everything your child does. Insist on high standards of presentation such as by trimming work before it is stuck in, ruling neat margins, etc: if children can see that you value the work they are doing, they will take more care doing it.
- Familiarise yourself with Google Classrooms (Tapestry in Reception) so you can support your child to navigate their way around it – I’m sure we’ll all become experts before very long. Work can be posted to the Classroom and live sessions will also take place on this platform.
- Children in Waveney Class can upload their work to Tapestry – Mrs East and Miss Bennett will be checking this every day.
- Remember, children can also access learning through Purple Mash, 10Ticks, and the Oak National Academy.
- Make learning ‘hands on.’ Activities that require equipment make learning more memorable.
- Be positive
- Keep your child well fed and hydrated
- Make it fun.
- Limit screen time to after school hours
- Get in touch if you are having any difficulties and we will try to help in any way we can.

We hope this is helpful. Remember, you are not alone. You can contact your child’s teacher directly, or write to Mr Taylor, or continue to contact the school using the office email.

Yours faithfully

Jeremy Leicester