Friday 24th April 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope that you are all faring well and enjoyed the glorious sunshine over the Easter fortnight; whilst sticking closely to health and safety restriction guidelines!

As we come to the close of our 3rd week of Home Schooling for the majority of our pupils, we are pleased to hear from a number of parents that you are now falling into a regular routine which works for you.

This point is very important - whilst we are providing a comprehensive weekly Home Learning pack - we cannot re-iterate enough, that we do not expect your children to complete ALL of this.

YOU choose (i) how many hours a day your child(ren) work - the recommendation being between 2 - 3 hours. (ii) what days and times your child(ren) work (iii) what learning activities from our packs, from online resources and from your own bank of great ideas you wish to choose. Whilst regular reading and writing opportunities are important, follow your child’s personal interest. For example, we have heard how Hamish is throwing himself into his own history projects which he is really loving!

Today we will upload answer sheets for this week’s pack, as well as a new pack for next week. We will continue to provide hard copies for all those who do not have access to a computer or printer - these can be collected each Monday after 10am.

In addition to the country’s daily Government briefings, the Department for Education delivers regular updates to schools. Below is the most recent update which may be useful to you…..

GOV.UK ADVICE - 23rd April 2020 *(Saint Patrick’s response)*

‘While staying at home due to coronavirus (COVID-19), parents and carers will be concerned about their children’s education and the impact of missing school. No one expects parents to act as teachers, or to provide the activities and feedback that a school would. Speak to your school who will be planning work for your child to do. Parents and carers should do their best to help children and support their learning.’

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|  | *Get up - wash / shower / brush your teeth - positive mindset for the day task / GET DRESSED!*  *Eat breakfast* |
| *30mins* | *Be active - eg. 9am Joe Wicks / online yoga etc.* |
| *45mins* | *Reading or writing task* |
| *20mins* | *Break - juice / outdoor* |
| *45mins* | *Maths or science* |
| *30mins* | *Online activities / games* |
| *45mins* | *Lunch* |
| *30mins* | *Outdoor play* |
| *45mins* | *Be creative - make something - Art or DT project / Science investigation* |
| *30mins* | *Help out at home - make a bed, wash up, help prepare dinner* |
| *60mins* | *TV time / care for pet / family walk / gardening* |
|  | *Prepare, eat and clear up after dinner* |
| *60mins* | *Winding down time (no screen for approx. hour before bed) Listen to music, read, jigsaws, cosmic kids yoga, chat* |
|  | *Teeth / shower / reflect on the day - best bits and achievements - bed* |

STRUCTURING THE DAY

Do not worry about trying to maintain a full routine for your child like they had at school. But children will feel more comfortable and learn better with a predictable routine to the day, even if this is difficult.

When schools provide children with work they may give you advice on how to structure the day. But generally, you should try to make sure that they:

* get up and go to bed at the same time each day
* have regular meal times
* have regular breaks
* make time to be active - children are used to regular play

at lunch and break times

USING DIGITAL DEVICES

Your child’s school may set them work that can be done on a digital device such as a laptop, desktop, tablet or smartphone. Set age-appropriate parental controls on any devices your child is using and supervise

their use of websites and apps. See [advice on keeping them safe online](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/) and talk to your child about online safety.

Reducing screen time

Digital devices are not the only way to learn. Manage screen time with a timer *(set your phone alarm, microwave ping etc.)* and break up screen time by getting your child to:

* use books and other printed materials that their school has provided or that you have at home *(we can change some reading scheme books if you need us to - contact us and we will prepare them to be swapped)*
* write by hand – try asking them to complete work by hand, write a diary, a summary of things they have learned or done each day or ‘to do’ lists *(look up ‘scrap book journals ideas’ for titles of lists for children to compose)*
* be active and get away from the screen regularly – see a selection of [physical activity resources](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-online-education-resources-for-home-education#pe-and-physical-activity-primary) for primary school children *(Change 4 Life have lots of ideas, skipping games, hula hooping on the spot, choreographing a dance!!)*
* stop using digital devices at least an hour before bed *(try to do a daily wind down and reflect on the day - HAPPIEST PART / FUNNIEST PART / CHALLENGING PART / BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT / GRATEFUL FOR… Prayers before bedtime - Prayer of the Hand)*

RECEPTION, YEAR 1 AND YEAR 2 CHILDREN

The best way to help children aged 4 to 7 learn is to:

* sit with them as they work *(make a ‘school space’ - clear ‘desk’ and chair, pot of pencils, word cards etc)*
* do active and practical things, rather than trying to make them sit and listen for long periods
* try to break down the work into shorter periods, based on how long they can concentrate
* take frequent breaks *(share with your child what you will both do today so they know what to look forward to - make clear your ‘Now and Next…’ activities)*
* praise or reward them when they do well *(stickers? Mexican waves? high fives? Facetime a relative to show great work? Take a photo and send work to us at school to go up on the class gallery)*

Talking

Talk with your child throughout the day and try to explain new words. For example, discuss everything you are doing and pick out words that might be new to them. *(make a ‘Brilliant Word of the Day’ poster and stick it on the wall - use it correctly during family time, meal time etc. Be mindful of the words young children may be hearing on radio and TV)*

Reading Together

When you read with your child try to:

* express the emotion in the story
* give colour to the characters using voices, tone and pace
* discuss the things you are reading *(try to guess what is happening through the pictures, try to predict what will happen over the page, ask questions about characters? Ask some questions which only need short answers (CLOSED QUESTIONS ) eg. what colour is…? What is the name of ….? Then as some more OPEN QUESTIONS eg. Why did he….? What was she thinking / feeling? What did the author want us to think…? What words make us feel…..? Snuggle up and get comfy whilst reading together!)*

Libraries are currently closed, but you can find digital services they are providing at [Libraries Connected](https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/page/librariesfromhome). *(Remember Oxford Owl - you can access hundreds of books online!)*

Phonics

Phonics is a method schools use to teach children how to read quickly and skilfully. Contact your school, which will be working on ways to help you with this. Try to sit with your child and practise with them, following the advice you get from their school. *(Look at the class pages - teachers will give information and resources for daily phonic practice)*

Writing

Try to help children to continue to practise their writing. This may include the formation of letters and familiarity with pens and pencils for younger children, or practising creative writing for older children. *(practise handwriting by copying poems, nursery rhymes or song lyrics, takeaway menus, football league tables etc.)*

Ask children to write about their day-to-day experiences of being at home, or to write letters to send to family members. *(write to us!, scrap book journal ideas, treasure hunt directions, recipe instructions for baking and making etc.)*

Numbers

Practise counting and numbers. This does not always have to be a planned activity. For example, count things around the house while you are doing other things like cooking or cleaning. *(practise number bonds and tables on the stairs - go forward one step if you get one correct! Weekly X Factor tables tests, online times tables songs - or make them up to a familiar tune yourselves, Ludo, snakes and ladders, hopscotch, patience etc.)*

For older children learning sums, ask your school for help or see a [list of resources to help with maths](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-online-education-resources-for-home-education#maths-primary) recommended by teachers and school leaders. *(Professor Assessor, Oak National Academy, BBC Bitesize Daily etc.)*

YEAR 3 to 6 CHILDREN

The best way to help children aged 7 to 11 learn is to:

* give them support and direction, but encourage them to do work independently too *(check they understand what the task is asking them, then set them 10 - 15mins to work independently before you come back and check)*
* include active and practical things, rather than trying to make them sit and work for long periods *(making, inventing, creating - start a brand new hobby where they have to learn and regularly practise a new set of skills eg. knitting, watercolour, juggle, wash a car, mow the lawn, learn a language on BBC Bitesize Daily, photography, Lego packs etc )*
* try to break down the work into shorter periods, based on how long they can concentrate
* take frequent breaks *(share with your child what you will both do today so they know what to look forward to - make clear your ‘Now and Next…’ activities. Include child in planning the day and choosing learning tasks)*
* praise or reward them when they do well *(Facetime a relative to show great work? Take a photo and send work to us at school to go up on the class gallery)*

Talking

Ask children to talk through what they have learned during the day and find time to talk with them more generally. *(Good opportunities to develop mental wellbeing - reflect on highlights and lowlights of day - put words to negative feelings. Seek positive affirmation. Best bit of the day, funniest, greatest achievement, thing I’m looking forward to tomorrow, thing I am grateful for…)*

Reading

Talk to your child about what they are reading. This will help them understand what they have read and encourage them to read for fun.

Ask your child questions about what they are reading. For example:

* ask questions that make them think about the story, such as how a character is feeling
* ask them to tell you what has happened in the story so far
* *discuss similarities and differences between books and authors, talk about illustrations - what do they tell us? What mood do they create? Inference and deduction - become a story detective looking for underlying clues, express opinions about books - If you don’t enjoy a book - WHY NOT? Discuss why the author is using certain words, -phrase, tricks for his / her audience.*
* *Non-fiction books, picture books, comics, graphic novels, recipe books, instruction manuals, children’s weekly newspapers such as First News and the Week are all VERY valuable - the same questions can be applied.*

Libraries are currently closed, however, you can find digital services they are providing at [Libraries Connected](https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/page/librariesfromhome). *Oxford Owl Reading - hundreds of books available online*

Writing

Try to help children practise their writing. Work from school may be sent digitally, but using pen and paper will help children be ready for when they go back to school. *(practise handwriting by copying poems, nursery rhymes or song lyrics, takeaway menus, football league table etc. Send photos of your writing to us to be uploaded onto the class Gallery)*

* *Write about ANYTHING that takes their interest and inspires them - don’t be afraid to go off task if children are engaged and interested - share this enthusiasm and interest with us!*
* *Look up Scrap Book Journal writing ideas for composing personal lists*
* *Write for purpose - write a letter and then send it*

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF YEAR 6 CHILDREN

Year 6 children (aged 10 to 11) should continue doing any work set for them by their school.

To prepare for going to secondary school this can be a good time for them to follow their own interests. For example, for:

* history, by visiting the [English Heritage](https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/members-area/kids/) website to explore England’s history
* geography, by researching other countries
* science, by finding out more about the human body on [BBC Bitesize](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zcyycdm)
* art, by trying the activities on [TATE Kids](https://www.tate.org.uk/kids)

Ask your primary school about how you can help your child prepare for moving up to secondary school. *We are already holding transition meetings with secondary schools about pupils and are putting together a transition pack of work which will be used in term 6. You may want to look at Year 7 work on the BBC Bitesize daily as a sort of ‘bridging unit’.*

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ONLINE RESOURCES

On Sunday evening, the Government’s daily briefing announced that they had sponsored two new online learning resources.



BBC BITESIZE DAILY - has been developed by the BBC to provide new lessons every weekday for pupils in Year 1 to Year 10. Created in collaboration with teachers and educational experts, videos and interactive activities cover core subjects and other topics on the school curriculum (eg. Science, languages, geography, Music etc.) Content is available for free on television (red button), online and through BBC iPlayer.

You'll find six different 20 minute shows per weekday on [BBC iPlayer](https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p089nk5f), each targeting children of different ages (5-7, 7-9, 9-11 years, that is primary aged children - starting at 9am, and 11-12, 12-13, 13-14 years, for those at secondary school - starting at 10am).

OAK NATIONAL ACADEMY - Department for Education have funded this new resource created by teachers from schools across England in response to school closures. This free resource for teachers, launched this week, will provide the equivalent of three hours of lessons a day for primary school pupils and four hours a day for secondary across a variety of subjects. Lessons have been devised by practising teachers, combining videos, quizzes and worksheets. Our own teachers will dip into and signpost to certain tasks and videos in future weekly learning packs we send home, but you may want to explore this website yourselves too.

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*AND FINALLY ……*

HAPPY EASTERTIDE! Although the Easter Eggs may all be eaten, please remind our children we are now in the period of Eastertide which lasts for 50 days. You may have been accessing Holy Week and Sunday services online over the break. Churchservices.tv is a great provider for regular services - so far, I have ‘attended’ Mass in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Canada and Australia!

STAY IN TOUCH - Teachers have started making phonecalls to each family this week and will continue next week. This is a chance for them to see how you and your child are getting on at home, as well as to see how we can help in any way. However, there is always a small team of staff - Mrs. Courtney and myself, Mrs. Gilbert or Mrs.Taylor, or Mrs. White who will be able to help you if you need to ask us ANYTHING!

CONGRATULATIONS! To Harvey who won the Clifton Diocesan wide competition from before the break. His ‘Story of Hope’ won the under 8 years category and is now available for us all to read on <https://cliftondiocese.com/news/stories-of-hope>

GALLERY OF WORK - Thanks to Luke in Reception and Anastasia in Year 2 who sent us pictures of their brilliant Easter gardens that they made at home. We will upload these pictures onto our new Gallery of Work on each class page of our website. Please take pictures of any work you are particularly proud of and send it to sarah.taylor@ st-patricks.wilts.sch.uk and we will display it on the website.

RAINBOWS OF HOPE - at school we have been making rainbows with which we are starting to decorate the school. Even if you are at home, paint or make a rainbow and post it to us, through Royal Mail, or pop it through our letterbox. We can then put it up with the others and watch the display grow.

This week, we are also starting to decorating our school gates with rainbow ribbons. If your daily walk brings you near to school, come and tie a colourful piece of material on our gates - let’s see how bright and cheery we can make our school look to anyone passing by!

*STAY SAFE AND WELL. THINKING OF YOU ALL*

*R.E. McLoughlin & J. Courtney*