Monday 30th March 2020

Dear Parent and Carers,

We know and understand that you will be feeling stressed, overwhelmed and under pressure by everything that’s happening in the world right now. We don’t want you to be overly concerned about the work being sent/put online for your child to complete. We wanted to give you our perspective on this. We hope this will go some way towards alleviating any worries you may have.

A few things:

What you are doing is not home-schooling. This is an unprecedented, emergency situation impacting the whole world and we need to keep some perspective.  What we send home are activities which will keep the children busy and should be fun.

If you decide that your child isn’t going to engage with everything that has been set or sent home please do not worry. What we are sending are things we feel are of interest to the children but there are also many practical ways to engage your child at home.

E.g.

Practical hands on maths; cooking, cleaning, maths games etc.

Fine motor work; Lego, playdough, cutting, tidying away small toys etc.

Physical exercise every day.

Some art/something creative. This doesn’t need to be guided.

If old enough, start a project. Research something and present it to the rest of the family.

If younger, lots of imaginative free play.

You will be doing enough, you are loving your children and supporting them through this difficult time. Look after yourselves. Minimising stress is absolutely vital at a time like this for your own mental health. Don’t let this be something that adds more stress.

Here are some answers to a few questions raised:

Q: My school has set lots of work, how am I supposed to get through it all?

A: You’re not, don’t try. It’s there if you need it. Some parents want a little and some want a lot - it is all optional.

Q: Someone else in my child’s class has already completed everything and we haven’t even started. Will my child fall behind?

A: Even if all were equal in terms of time, support and number of children (which it’s not) all children learn at different rates. In class there’s a wide range of levels in all subjects, there’s different paces and there are many children working at different levels and pace. Just do what is right for you.

Your child will not fall behind. If children could all learn new concepts without specific teaching we wouldn’t need teachers. The children will cover this work again - multiple times.

Q: How can I get three lots of work done with 3 children of different ages?

A: 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.

Q: What’s the bare minimum amount of work you would expect?

A: As much as you can manage, we are all in survival mode and need to prioritise staying healthy. Your child’s teachers are human too, we understand the challenges.

Q: If we can’t do much what would you prefer us to do?

A: - A bit of reading every day, either independently, reading to them or listening to an audio book. Some free writing every now and again.

Every Tuesday and Wednesday you are welcome to collect breakfast items from school (free of charge). This will include cereals, bagels, porridge and baked beans. Depending on the weather these items will either be on a table outside the front of school or in the reception area.

It has not been an easy process establishing which children needed to be in school after Friday 20th March. The guidance I had to follow was this ‘…to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home’. Whilst I sincerely thank everyone who has shown compassion and understanding towards myself and my staff during this very difficult time I do feel sad for the small number of criticism and complaint. Child places were not provided so parents could work from home without disturbance from their children. Child places were not provided so a parent could continue a job that was not critical to the COVID-19 response. Please understand that any decisions I made were done to protect our children and my staff.

If you have any questions or just need to talk to someone please phone school as normal, if no-one answers you can leave a message and we will get back to you as quickly as possible.

We are all in this together!

Mrs Angela Clark

Angela Clark

Head of School