



Dear Parents & Carers

January 2021

Contents

- **Message from Mrs Majcher**
- **School arrangements**
- **Staff**
- **Well-being Wednesday afternoons**
- **Support calls from school**
- **Why we are using Teams**
- **Learning should be challenging & balanced**
- **Keeping well**
- **Home learning skills map**

Message from Mrs Majcher

I feel that now is the right time to write a newsletter. At the start of this lockdown we bombarded you with lots of letters, emails and messages, all of which you responded to beautifully – thank you. That enabled us to provide a smooth transition from ‘ordinary’ school to a virtual one, overnight! Anyway, that all seems an age away. For now, we must continue to follow government advice and stay at home.

School Arrangements

We are open for critical workers and vulnerable children only. Currently, we are running four hubs - Year 3, 4 and 5/6. Our Blossom class is running as it did before. Our trusty TAs are working with the children on a rota basis. The teachers are mostly working from home providing the home learning. This has been a massive undertaking even though Mrs Cameron provided excellent training for us all in the autumn term. However, the teachers have worked collaboratively to provide the lessons for the children. I have been hugely impressed at the speed that everyone has managed to deal with the ‘technology’ side of things.

Staff

This is not an easy time for anyone and staff in schools are no different. Staff are equally susceptible to Covid. Some have had the disease whilst others have had to self-isolate. At the moment, there is a growing number of staff who are suffering the loss of their nearest and dearest; fathers, brothers and aunties. It seems that the Covid ‘net’ is coming closer at an alarming rate. We are in this together and together we will come out of this!

Well-being Wednesday Afternoons

We will be introducing this next week. Working on a screen is very challenging and quite rightly, we all need a break from time to time. So, the teachers will be giving some great ideas to do off screen, for example, one of my favourites – colouring in, looking out of the window and sketching something, learning a new skill – the

list is endless! Whilst we are all at home learning a new skill or perhaps resurrecting an old one is a great idea. Please send in photos of your child doing an off screen activity we would love to see what they do.

Support Calls from School

From time to time, you may receive a phone call from school asking if your child needs any support with submitting their learning. We appreciate that all our families are incredibly busy at this difficult time, and that the Government requirement for fully timetabled learning has, for many of our families, made this even more challenging. These phone calls are purely supportive. We may be able to support families with:

- submitting work on Teams or providing alternatives appropriate to your child's learning needs.
- understanding expectations for your child's learning.
- suggesting strategies for organising the day/managing screen time/maintaining engagement.
- support with devices if you have not previously informed us of an issue.

We will be understanding of your circumstances and will work with you to try to find any solutions that we can to support your child's learning while we are in a lockdown situation.

Why we are using Teams

A few people have asked why our learning is being set through Teams and is not on the website as it was before:

- Teams is a learning platform recommended by the Government because it allows teachers to do much more than just provide learning resources.
- Teams allows teachers to see which children are accessing the learning, and who has handed in work.
- It allows us to provide feedback, both as written comments and using the highlighters directly on typed work.

- The Classroom Notebook area allows teachers to provide key information related to each subject, and links to logins and passwords for other online provision.
- Teams allows teachers to provide video or audio explanations for work as well as more traditional paper resources.
- The work is accessible throughout the day and not just in a specific time slot, which supports our families who may have multiple children in the household where it may not be practical to all be completing their core learning at exactly the same time.

Learning should be Challenging and Balanced

If learning is really easy then it probably isn't learning; It's probably things your children already know. New learning will be a bit difficult because children won't have done it before.

We spend a lot of time talking about learning skills, emotions and strategies in school around our work on growth mindset and learning behaviours. This week your child has been given a link to a learning skills assembly and skills mat on Teams. If they haven't watched it yet, then it can be found [here](#). There is also a page in the home learning hub all about remote learning skills with a link to a great video about the [learning pit](#).

It's really normal for children to say they don't know what to do, or that they 'can't do' their work. Below are some simple strategies to help them explore their learning. (They should be able to do some of this independently with some minor prompting).

I don't know what to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you read the task instruction out loud to yourself? (Sometimes children miss bits when they read in their heads - but as soon as they read it out loud, then they know what to do!) • Can you highlight the core instruction for your work? • How does your teacher do it in the example/teaching? Would watching it again help? (Once children are aware of their task, sometimes revisiting the input can help.) • Is there a part of it you can do? Could you start with that and then read the instructions again? • What would you do first if you did know how to do it? How would you start if you did know how to do it? (Amazingly, this works more often than you would think.)
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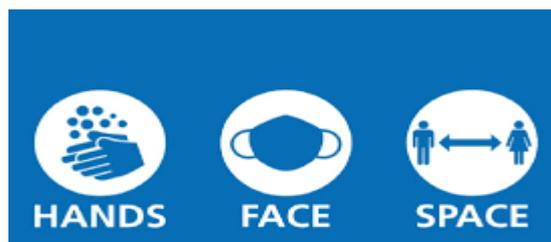
It's too hard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where would you say you are in the learning pit? What do you think you could try to get out of it? • In maths, for some children it will be entirely appropriate for them to only complete the first 2 or 3 questions. Look back at their in-school work to see what the expectation was for them. The questions get harder and the challenge questions should be tricky for a child working at greater depth.
When children are rushing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask them how they'd rank their effort in the task on a scale of 1-5. • Get them to check against the task and highlight the bits they have completed. (This is a really simple activity which helps them to review the work they have done, and see what they haven't).

Keeping well

In these unusual times lots of things are out of kilter. Things are happening at the wrong times and the wrong places, and some things are not happening at all. It's important to make time to do things that help you to relax. For some parents that might be a walk on your own, for others it might be a walk outside with the family. There is a [wellbeing page](#) in our home learning hub which contains lots of ideas that might help children relax too.

If the forecast is correct, there might even be an opportunity to create a few snowmen this weekend too. We'd love to see photos of any that children do manage to create.

Stay safe and remember



Home learning skills mat



Ready to learn?

Is your learning zone set up? Do you have:

- Some paper, a notebook or mini whiteboard to record your ideas?
- A pen, pencil or something else to write with.
- A place at a table or desk or somewhere flat to do your work
- Some water to drink
- Somewhere quiet so you can focus

Sharing a space? Have you thought about?

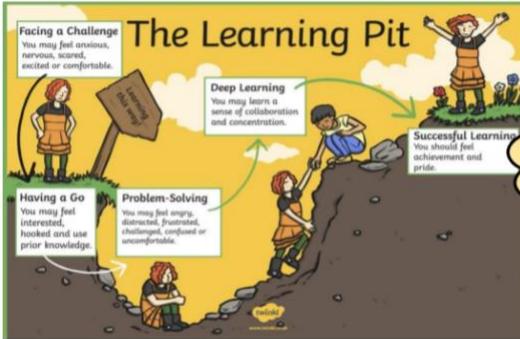
- Using headphones to make it quieter.
- Using a lap tray as a flat surface to write on.

Do I need to take a break and come back to my learning when I am fresh?

Growth Mindset Talk

What can I say to myself?

1. I'm not good at this.....I can't do this yet.
2. I give up.....I'll use some of the strategies I have learnt.
3. It's good enough.....Is this my best work yet?
4. I made a mistake.....This was my first attempt in learning.
5. This is too hard.....If something is hard, it means I'm learning!
6. I'm really good at maths.....I understand this because I have been practising.
7. I will never be as clever as them.....I'm going to find out how they do that.
8. I can't do this.....This is going to take time and effort to master.
9. I can't make this any better.....Improvements can always be made.
10. They can't do it.....How can I help them to understand this?



Can I use the teaching input again to check?

What am I being asked to do?

Have I done something like this before? Could I use the same skills?

Could I ask a learning question on Teams?

Is there an adult who can help me if I am really stuck?

