

Keeping in Touch – 3rd April 2020

Dear all,

We find ourselves at the end of our second week of the school being shut and the country in 'lock down'. I hope that you are establishing new routines at home, and finding joy in having more time together as a family and discovering different things to do.

Two of the biggest challenges that we find ourselves facing currently is having much more time on our hands to fill and the lack of social interactions that we normally take for granted. For adults and children alike, these are big adjustments to make. To help address these, two members of our school community have come up with great ideas.

I sent a letter out earlier in the week regarding a 'pen pal' initiative that Katy Tovey-Bowes is setting up between school families and vulnerable, isolated members of the community in our village. If you are interested in taking part in this, please contact Katy at katymorgan0811@gmail.com or via the FOKS Facebook group.

The other is Grace Dalgleish who is setting up a home art club for the duration of the shut down and will be posting a weekly challenge that should be simple to complete and create at home. If you are interested in finding out more or taking part go to <https://mailchi.mp/a9b96efa6bba/creativemindstrowbridge> and subscribe to join the group. She has also shared these links to keep you busy in the meantime!

<https://www.instagram.com/p/B-ew7JdlQz/?igshid=5505bxkizjo4> – ideas from the animator who worked with us in school to create our 150th Anniversary picture.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/B-euir4FWK5/?igshid=wt9cgo4mtmxb> – free art resources.

Through personal experience I appreciate the difficulties of trying to educate your child at home whilst juggling attempting to work oneself and manage all the other aspects of domestic life in the absence of the organisation, routines and support we all usually rely on. I do feel it is vitally important that children keep working and learning, practising and re-visiting knowledge and skills during this extended period of the school being shut. It will serve no-one in the long term for children to lose all structure during this time. However, what this looks like and what is achievable will look very different in each family's household – our situations, challenges, restrictions and opportunities are all varied. So it is important that you find the way that works for you and your family, and you do not compare yourself unfavourably to others. The most important thing is for all children to keep reading, writing and practising basic maths knowledge and skills, regularly. Also to maintain a curiosity and love of learning through investigation, research and learning about different things. To this end, after the Easter holidays teachers will be posting daily maths and English activities for you to do in the new class areas on the school website that we are currently developing. We will also be setting weekly projects for children to do. The idea being that these provide a foundation for you to use at home, to implement how best works for you and to build on if you have the time and inclination. You should have been contacted by your child's class teacher this week with a unique log-in which will enable you to access these areas of the website and to create a safe space for your child to interact with their teacher and classmates. We will also be contacting you after the holiday regarding a secure way for teaching staff to video call your child on a regular basis to check in on their learning and catch up with their news.

The strange time we find ourselves in currently makes it hard to differentiate between days of the week – which are 'working' and which are 'weekend'. As my daughter bemoaned the other day as I insisted that she got out of bed before 8am because it was a week day! The up-coming 2 weeks are 'holiday' in school eyes, and although they may not feel very different for you at home, particularly for the school staff I feel it is important that we respect them as such. I am sure that it has been the same for many of you, but everyone who works at school has had to grapple with a vast amount of change very rapidly in the past few weeks in amongst a national atmosphere of uncertainty and fear. They also now find themselves in the position of being 'key workers' who are being asked to put themselves at increased risk in order to maintain essential functions for the running of the country during this crisis. Therefore I will be asking all school staff to turn off their school emails for the next 2 weeks and to take a very well earned break. There will remain a long haul of this situation for us all to get through on our return on Monday 20th April. I would ask you to respect this as well. I will still be checking my email (lh@keevil.wilts.sch.uk) but I would ask that you only contact me with urgent and important matters that cannot wait until term re-starts.

I hope that you all stay well and safe during the next 2 weeks, and if there was ever a year to over-indulge in Easter chocolate I think this might be it!

Best wishes,
Lindsey Hermon



Keevil School's rainbows and learning from home