

Newchurch Community Primary School
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Headteacher: Mrs J Narraway

5th January 2021

Dear parent/carer,

Well we all knew it was coming but just a little more preparation time would have been great! As we move into yet another lockdown, we can reflect on the success of our learning last time and strive to make this one just as successful, if not better. The purpose of this letter is to give you an outline of what to expect as we move to remote learning tomorrow for the majority of our children. At this point can we explain that we have learned from the success of our remote learning for Year 1 and Year 2, and have used the parents' feedback to develop the plan.

Delivery of learning resources

Thank you for your patience today whilst we organised the distribution of resource packs for all the children who are working remotely – doing this for virtually the whole school after only finding out at 8pm last night was a mean feat but we managed to deliver them all ready for tomorrow. We are truly blessed with dedicated staff who came in very early this morning to photocopy packs for the children and who worked through their lunchtime (and beyond) to get them to your homes before the start of the school day tomorrow.

Within each pack is a selection of reading books and also a stapled pack which has some reading comprehensions in. These should be dated and are the resources for the guided reading the children will do **online** with a member of staff so please do not get your child to do them until instructed to do so. We have printed these resources for you following feedback from our Year 1 and Year 2 parents who found the session difficult with the paper copies of the text. Guided reading will begin week commencing 11th January so everyone can get settled before smaller group activities are timetabled.

In the parental survey, some parents indicated that they needed devices to support online learning. These have been distributed to the families who indicated that they needed one. Father Christmas also helped some families out and so we find ourselves in a position to loan other families who find they need a device. Please contact the school office if you would like to loan one and we will sort it out.

Learning expectations

This lockdown is very different from the last lockdown as the National Curriculum has not been suspended and we have been instructed by the Department for Education to ensure that the children



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continue with their sequential learning across the whole curriculum: basically each day is a school day. However, we also acknowledge that parents may need to work from home, there may be more than one child to cater for as well as pre-school children to occupy.

Blended Learning

What is different for us as educators is that we are needing to implement 'blended learning' which involves the teaching of children in school whilst providing equal provision for children working from home. We have always been honest with you and there is no need to change that now when we need to work as a team more than ever. As much as we need to recognise the commitments to your work or difficulties at home whilst supporting your child with their learning, this new approach is extremely new to the staff. They are committed to making this new way of working work but there may be some teething problems along the way which we need to work on together to improve them. It is lovely to see the compassion many of you have expressed towards us since September and hope that you know how much we want to do what is best for the children of Newchurch so if things are not quite working for you, please contact us and let us know but be mindful that the staff are doing their very best.

Staff wellbeing

As well as pupil and parent wellbeing, we need to consider that of the staff, as their day will look very different. They will be providing live teaching/streaming, creating videos at home to upload as well as loom recordings for some lessons which are accompanied by PowerPoints. This is going to impact on their time after school as the preparation is going to be a much lengthier process for them which eats into their marking and feedback time that they would normally do after school or in the evenings. With this in mind, we ask that any work the children do to be uploaded no later than 4pm (or even throughout the day) so they can mark the children's work and then use it to inform the planning for the next day. The staff will use the marking keys they use in the children's books which are detailed in our marking and feedback policy on the school website.

As it is now National Curriculum, each day must follow on from the next so if the children need something repeating, then the teacher will need to plan this in the evening thus needing to have seen the work early enough. Although we know many of you are working too, we would very much appreciate your support in this.

By 6pm this evening, on Google Classroom, you will have received a timetable for the week which will detail the learning for your child. This will help you to plan ahead around any meetings or conferences for work you may have. These have been very much tailored to the age of the children. We would love to have provided you with the timetable earlier but we have had a meeting virtually as a staff after school this evening to look at the timetable with a view to limiting the chances of siblings needing to be online at the same time. We may not get it right for everyone but we will do our very best. If you are finding any of the timings tricky, please contact us and we will do our best to see if we can find a solution – it may not always be the case that we can, but we will give it our best shot.

Virtual registration and attendance

Each day, at the time they would normally start the school day, **all** children are expected to log on to Google Classroom for a virtual register. Be warned! The first time can be a little chaotic and expect some technical issues at the start but be assured that it gets easier each day – promise! A link will be



sent to you on which you will need to click to enter the virtual register. Once entering, please mute your child's microphone.

The class teacher will take the register as normal and anyone who is not present will be recorded as absent. This will then be sent to the office who will contact any parents of children not present. In this lockdown, engagement in remote learning is expected and attendance is recorded so if a child is absent, we will follow our usual procedure of contacting you to find out the reason and to see if we can help – usually it is something to do with the technology! Monitoring attendance is part of our safeguarding duty and therefore we will ensure that we contact any parent of a child who has not attended the virtual register. If your child is ill, or for some reason you are not able to get on the virtual register, please contact the school office on 01925 763427 or via email:

newchurch_primary@warrington.gov.uk. If your child is ill, notify us so we will mark them absent for that reason. If we do not have a reason for a child not being present, it will be marked as unauthorised.

The parents, whose children have worked remotely, informed us the virtual register helped the children to see it as a school day (which it is) and enabled them to be focused in their learning. At the end of the day, the teachers will live stream a story to the children and on some occasions this will be a video recording.

Contacting staff

Please could we ask that the timing of communication with staff is considered. To ensure work-life balance, staff should not be communicated at times which are not within reasonable hours. We have discussed this as a staff as we appreciate that some of you will be working and wish to contact them after work. Therefore, we have stated that staff will only respond to messages between 8am and 6:30pm. Within the school day, staff will do their best to support you but may be engaged in other learning with groups of children remotely or in the classroom. They will do their best to accommodate your needs. If your query is urgent, please contact the school office.

Help!! The technology doesn't work!

If you are struggling to get on line or upload work, please do call the school office and we will support you – often talking you through the procedures over the phone. As we discovered last night, when the teachers2parent texting service crashed as we were contacting parents, technology is not always our friend.

Curriculum

The children will engage in phonics/spelling, English, Maths and other subjects such as science, history and geography. These will be detailed on the timetable – some will be whole class whilst others will be small groups. The method of delivery will be either live, video recording or a loom video.

All the learning for the day will be scheduled to be uploaded at 8am in the morning. Unless your child is involved in a live streaming of a lesson, you are free to do the lessons in any order you wish and at any time you wish within the school hours.



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Special Needs

For those who have children who have EHCPs and have decided not to send their child in, we will be in touch with you regarding the additional support that will be provided for your child whilst learning remotely. Mrs Conreen, our school SENCo will be also be making calls to support you if needed.

Welfare Calls

It is important that we remain connected when we are all working in such a dispersed way and so every fortnight, we will endeavour to make welfare calls to all our families working remotely, which will give you the opportunity to have a chat about how things are going and enable us to support you if needed, be it academically or emotionally. We appreciate how hard it may be for some families. As always the message from us is you can only do your best and we are here to support you in any way we can whilst also continuing to develop your children.

We are excited about finding a new way of working and making sure that all children have equal access to learning, whether they are at home or school. Together, we can continue to prepare our Newchurch robins to fly.

With kindest regards,

Mrs Jayne Narraway

Head Teacher



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