

4th February 2021

Dear Parents,

I am sure you would agree that January seemed to be a very long month. We have only one more week until half term and then hopefully – fingers crossed – we will only have to continue with home learning for another two weeks before we will be able to welcome back all the children into school. The local numbers of positive cases are declining rapidly, so our efforts to 'follow the rules' do seem to be working.

Having been reading recent research, the psychologists have reported that everyone is struggling with 'lockdown exhaustion' at this time. This has been defined as having little motivation; finding it harder than normal to do normal tasks; having 'brain fog'; finding it hard to concentrate; and having low mood. I can certainly empathise with these feelings, and I am sure they will resonate with many of you too. We all need to remember that this pandemic is taking its toll on all of us, and try to focus on the little positive moments.

As you know the Department for Education requires us to set three to four hours of work per day for Reception and Key Stage 1; four to five hours per day for Key Stage 2; with tasks which move the children's learning forward. We are fulfilling this requirement by posting the learning onto the VLE so that the children can access the explanations and tasks at times which work for their family dynamic. Under no circumstances would we expect the children to sit working independently for that stretch of time in one go! We would anticipate the children breaking up their learning with down-time between tasks. Please be aware that the teachers are posting estimated times for the tasks – as long as your child has given the task their best effort, please do not worry if every task is unable to be completed in full. We do understand that you are all doing your best in very challenging circumstances to support your children, whilst simultaneously surmounting the challenges of home working and living under the many restrictions placed on us at the moment. Well done everyone!

We have already started the setting up of G-suite emails for the children which will enable them to virtually meet with their peers and teachers briefly each day. We do hope that you will be able to facilitate your children joining these Meets in the very near future. Full details will be sent as soon as we have everything in place to ensure that the children can participate safely. As you may imagine the paperwork involved to ensure that all the requirements of data protection and on-line safety are adhered to is enormous!

It has been lovely today to see many of the KS1 children and their parents for the collection of reading books. The next drop off date will be Monday 22nd February before 12 noon please, and then pick up in the time windows on Thursday 15th February. It is also so good to see some of the older children as they pop in to drop off or collect work. We miss them.

I would like to draw your attention to a letter from Dr Simon Aulton, our Chair of Governors, which is attached to this newsletter. I do hope you will be able to find a moment to read it.

I am aware that the 's' word is being mentioned for this coming weekend – the joys of snow! The beginning of next week looks to be very cold, but I do hope you will all be able to find a moment to appreciate the beauty of nature despite the sub-zero temperatures.

Mrs K. Tamlyn

Head Teacher