

Monday 25th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

As we embark on our fourth week of the current school closures, I wanted to write to you again to update you regarding our developing remote learning provision and to wish you all well for the week ahead.

Thank you to those parents who have taken the time to send in positive feedback or comments to your child/ren's teachers. I cannot speak highly enough of their adaptation to a very different way of working – one that none of us have been trained for! We continue to meet regularly (virtually of course) in order to review our remote learning provision, and every member of the teaching team has been willing to embrace suggestions or to consider new ways forward. Let me assure you that we are not sitting still, but continuously seeking to improve our offer. Everyone wants to do the very best that we can for our children in a challenging set of circumstances.

Our new dedicated e-mail addresses are working well to facilitate rapid help and support for parents when needed. However, I would ask you to be mindful of what you submit to these accounts. Although they are not the teacher's personal e-mail addresses, it will be the staff member/s leading our remote provision that week who will receive your message and respond to you. I recognise that many of you too are operating within the context of extreme stress and pressure. However, last week, several e-mails received by teachers were loaded with frustration and impacted on the well-being of staff. Please remember to be kind. Technical issues are at times unavoidable – although, of course, immensely frustrating. If we have tried something and got it wrong, then we will learn from it. We need to look after each other.

Reflecting On Our Journey So Far this Term...

Week 1:

- Sunday: Government assure teachers and parents that primary schools are open. Staff plan for provision in school.
- Monday: Return to school – business as usual. At 8pm, the Prime minister announces the closure of primary schools to most pupils, with a switch to remote learning from tomorrow.
- Tuesday: Switch to remote learning. Provision akin to that offered throughout the previous lockdown in place for all children by 12pm. Teachers undertake basic TEAMS training with a view to including a live lesson element this time as soon as possible.
- Wednesday: Provision in school opens for vulnerable children and the children of key workers. Individual login credentials posted out, providing every child with access to the full Microsoft Office 365 Suite in order to facilitate our live lessons.
- Thursday: Provision in school continues to run alongside remote learning. Staff rota system and dedicated e-mail addresses now in place in order to offer full-time remote learning support. Schedule for live lessons is published – carefully planned to ensure that lessons do not coincide for any siblings in different classes.
- Friday: Technical support required for many families to ensure the successful download of Microsoft Office 365 Suite.

Week 2:

- Monday: Our first foray into live lessons via Microsoft TEAMS. Teachers and parents demonstrate great patience and perseverance!
- Tuesday: Teaching staff meet to share successes and issues encountered so far. Parents with children who require differentiated learning or additional intervention on a daily basis begin to report that their children are struggling. Staff plan to introduce additional live sessions for these children as part of a small group.
- Wednesday: Solutions are sought to identified technical issues – all those that can be easily addressed are resolved quickly. Parents are updated with regards to these as well as the plan to begin introducing additional small group support for those children who require differentiated learning or additional intervention on a daily basis, possibly due to an identified SEND.
- Thursday: Staff reflect on how they can further emulate the structure of a normal literacy lesson in which they usually have the opportunity to work closely with a guided group of children following their main lesson input.
- Friday: Staff benefit from further TEAMS training provided by a generous and knowledgeable parent within our community! Some issues cannot be resolved without an update to our version of TEAMS – school seek to address this with external IT support.

Week 3:

- Teachers try to emulate their classroom practice by working closely with a small group of children following on from their Literacy input – also with a view to checking-in with each child in the class properly, on a more personal level, at least once a week.
- Non-contact time for teachers leading our provision in school is put in place so that they are released at a time that enables them to lead the live Literacy session for their own class at least once during their week in school.
- Daily, live, small-group Literacy sessions begin for those children who require differentiated learning or additional intervention on a daily basis, possibly due to an identified SEND.
- Daily, live, small-group Maths sessions begin for those children who require differentiated learning or additional intervention on a daily basis, possibly due to an identified SEND.
- Teachers meet to consider next steps. Thought given to our daily provision for Maths in particular.
- Remote learning resources for PE sent out to parents.
- Responses from our parent survey are collated and reflected upon to further inform our next steps.

Plans for the Week Ahead...

Week 4:

- Recorded Maths lesson inputs to be further developed and supplemented with narrated PowerPoints or videos made by the teachers.
- Worship assemblies in place, at least three times a week. My reflection on Sunday's gospel will go out on Mondays and Juliette, our school Chaplain, will prepare a video worship to be shared every Thursday. This will be further supplemented with other spiritual enrichment opportunities throughout the week.
- Mr Lane has created his own private YouTube channel, through which he will upload PE challenges. There will be a new challenge available by Monday morning each week via the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBoMkgvfiqKsv8x_uHNBZ7xiWkrXGbUej

- Planned update to school TEAMS, hopefully unlocking full functionality to staff.
- Further staff training on TEAMS following our package update – if successful.

Response to Parent Feedback...

91 primary phase parents completed the recent survey regarding our remote learning provision. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and conveyed huge appreciation for the hard work of staff. 91.2% of those parents who completed the questionnaire reported being *'happy with the online learning provision.'* Many parents took the time to offer suggestions, highlighting those areas where they felt there was potential for further development. This feedback is invaluable as we seek to continuously improve things for our children.

Some of the over-arching themes and initial responses are as follows...

TEAMs:

- **Can there be more training for teachers on how to use TEAMs?**
- **Is there a way of every child appearing on the screen?**

As aforementioned, many of the difficulties experienced by staff are due to a software issue at school. We are seeking to address this as soon as possible, but it relies on external IT support. Once we have had all the necessary updates carried out, then we should be able to utilise the full functionality of TEAMs, which includes the ability to select the 'gallery view.' If the scheduled update is successful, then Mr Ryan has kindly volunteered his own time to host a further training session for staff this Friday.

IT Support for Parents:

- **Some parents are having difficulty accessing the recording of live lessons**
- **Others are struggling to access the sound in recorded PowerPoint presentations.**

We are looking to host some TEAMs training sessions for parents once we have resolved the issues our end. In the meantime, please use your designated support e-mail to request assistance – I cannot extend an offer of help in response to specific issues raised in an anonymous questionnaire. Following your download of the full Microsoft Office 365 suite, you should be able to access our PowerPoint files in their entirety so please do get in touch with your child's teaching team if this is not the case.

Remote PE Provision:

- **Can Mr Lane set challenges to encourage sport at home?**

Hopefully this has already been resolved following the distribution of some fantastic remote learning ideas and challenges created by Mr Lane. Also, from this week, he will be uploading video-based PE challenges on a weekly basis via his dedicated YouTube channel.

Live Lessons:

- **These are great – could there be more of them?**

This is something that we will continue to consider, especially as our live lessons are proving so popular. There is a balance to be had, however, in terms of meeting a vast array of different wants and needs amongst all families in our school community. If staff can find the capacity to increase the number of live sessions, then it will be impossible to avoid sibling clashes, potentially disadvantaging those families who are having to share devices. It could also place more pressure on those parents who are having to fit distance learning in around their own work commitments. Our hope was to be providing a good balance of direct teaching in varied formats. We will continue to reflect on this in the coming week.

- **Why are they all Literacy-based?**

In my first letter to you all regarding our remote learning package, I explained the rationale for making the focus of these sessions Literacy-based. Having been through one period of school closures already, we found that our children returned to school able to pick up at age-related expectations for Maths and Reading fairly

rapidly. However, the impact on children's writing was much more pronounced and concerns us greatly, so it must be our top priority throughout this second period of remote learning.

- **Why does the lesson change in length?**

Firstly, it is important to note that during the school day, a lesson would never consist of an hour's direct input from the teacher. This is not how children learn best. The duration of lesson inputs will depend on the focus of the planned lesson. Please bear in mind that teachers also have different styles. Something that I look for in lessons is great pace – this helps to keep the children on track and focused in the classroom. From last Monday, following the main input, teachers planned to incorporate a weekly opportunity for every child to work more closely with them. I apologise for any confusion or upset that this caused – the intention was to improve the opportunity for quality interaction between children and their teachers. This is also crucial for us to monitor more closely how children are getting on and to adjust our future planning accordingly. Unfortunately, nothing will ever serve as a complete replacement for being in the classroom together.

Maths Provision:

- **The feedback here is mixed – some parents report that the work is too easy, others that it is too hard**
- **There is a need for greater teacher-input.**

Hopefully our daily, live, small-group Maths sessions for those children who require differentiated learning or additional intervention on a daily basis have already made a difference to this experience for a number of our children. From this week onwards, recorded Maths lesson inputs will also be further developed and supplemented with narrated PowerPoints or videos made by the teachers. We will continue to review this provision. Please do get in touch with your child's teaching staff if they are still struggling to access the learning and we will look at what support can be put in place for them.

Independence of Children in Years 1 and 2:

- **Many of our younger children are struggling to access and complete work independently**
- **This is made more challenging by the need to navigate Purple Mash**
- **Longer writing tasks are a particular struggle, especially with regards to motivation and stamina.**

The Key Stage 1 team and I will reflect on our current provision and see what we can do to support independence and address these issues. An update will follow.

Purple Mash:

- **Can there be less screen-based learning?**
- **Typing answers into the Maths booklets is difficult.**

Most of the materials set on Purple Mash (including the Maths Booklets), can be downloaded and printed out. If you are unable to do this yourself at home, then please get in touch to request support with this.

- **Work gets removed at the end of the week, but I would like to be able to access it somehow.**

Please contact your class teacher and work can be reallocated, no problem.

- **Please could the heading of each task include the date that is set?**

This is a great suggestion and one that we will action.

Staff Requests...

Please discourage your child from using the chat function in TEAMS to send emoji's or memes. We think this adds to our 'lag' issues and some teachers are currently unable to disable this function due to our technical issues. The chat function can really facilitate interaction within our live lessons so please support your child/ren to use it appropriately.

Since the switch to full remote learning, our whole-school data shows that pupil engagement with Oxford Reading Buddy has not increased at all. Please encourage your child/ren to go on this platform on a daily basis. It is something that most children are able to access independently so, where many parents are busy juggling the demands of working from home, this will enable your child to complete their daily reading and check their own comprehension with the subsequent online quizzes. If you are experiencing any technical issues with Oxford Reading Buddy, then please report these to your child's teaching team via their year group dedicated e-mail address.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes as always,



Liz Wogan

EWN@st-peters.bournemouth.sch.uk

Just a reminder, the table shows the time at which your child's live lesson/s will start each day:

8:30am	5AM	6ER
9:00am	5RA	6JR
9:30am	1AS	
10:15am	1JD	2KP
11:15am	4TM	2LM
12:15pm	4BD	3JB
1:15pm		3BF
2pm	RKH Story Time *Tuesdays only	RSR Story Time *Tuesdays only
2:30pm	5AM	6ER
3pm	5RA	6JR

For further information or any clarification regarding your child's remote learning schedule, please contact your child's teaching team using the dedicated e-mail addresses:

Reception	supportRec@stpetersca.com
Year 1	supportYr1@stpetersca.com
Year 2	supportYr2@stpetersca.com
Year 3	supportYr3@stpetersca.com
Year 4	supportYr4@stpetersca.com
Year 5	supportYr5@stpetersca.com
Year 6	supportYr6@stpetersca.com