



26/01/2021

Dear parents/carers,

Thought of the day: Your present situation is not your final destination. The best is yet to come.

Time for an update!

As we have mentioned before, we are always looking to improve and offer more. We are confident, after speaking to colleagues in other schools across the Midlands, that our online/remote learning offer is up there with the best. We are not a school who have offered one style of learning. Neither have we solely relied upon an external provider. The positive comments we have received from parents is a real boost to colleagues as we continue to adapt to this style of working.

With all that being said, I have been asked to send a reminder to parents to sign up for Seesaw Family. This will allow interactivity between parents and staff. The details can be found at the end of this email for each year group.

The afternoon zoom story calls have been of great success. This is an area we have discussed further and have decided to enhance our offer.

Offering zoom calls for live lessons is unrealistic. Both in terms of time and in terms of being able to cater for all learners. Having 30 children in a live call asking questions and talking over each other would be more of a hindrance than a help. Some parents have asked about small group sessions. If we were to offer small group sessions, this too would mean far less time for staff to interact with children, as they would be tied up repeating lessons. We have also found our children access their learning at different times.

We have however, decided to launch an additional, daily small group live Zoom session starting on Thursday this week. Your child's invitation will be scheduled to appear in their activities on the afternoon the day before their morning meet up. Your child will be invited, initially, for one session a week. It will begin at 9am and last approximately 20 minutes. Children (not parents) will have the chance to chat with friends and their classteacher. This will also allow for children to ask any questions about their learning. They may be responded to in that time or the class teacher may decide to upload additional resource to help with issues in the learning. (If your child is attending school as part of the key worker group they won't receive an allocation initially.)

[Picture news](#)

We have recently subscribed to Picture News. Picture News allows opportunities for children to learn about our world, develop independence, resilience, respect and unlock their own drive and passion for learning. Teaching the news not only provides great content and stimulus and grips children's attention, it is also something that the children can impact. It is current, happening now and so their voice is given meaning and purpose. Each week we will allocate the activity for children to access. There is no requirement to complete the activities.

#### Next Wednesday 3rd February

Next week is Children's Mental Health week. If in school, this would have been a focus throughout the year groups. We have decided that next Wednesday is going to be an off timetable day for all learners. Having listened to feedback from some parents, some children feel over pressured by the amount of activities available for their children to complete. Equally, as parents, some of you have expressed the pressure that you feel under to complete all of the learning too. This email is an opportunity to say again, we do not want our community to feel pressured or stressed about the amount of learning online. We have a legal duty to provide it, but are none to aware that everybody has their own individual circumstances which will dictate how much or little they are able to access. All we have asked is for a balance in approach for our children.

For those families who like the structure, this will still be available. Our aim is to offer activities that reduce screen time and allow children to focus on their own mental health.

#### Clinical Psychologist

Another of our strengths in school is Dr. George Harris. Normally, Dr George spends time with staff, children and parents. Having had conversations with Dr George just recently, we have developed an opportunity to reach further into our community. As we live in a time where Zoom calls and Microsoft Teams calls have become the norm, we are going to create a series of sessions for adults. These sessions will run anonymously so that you will be unable to see who else is in the call. The chat function will be replaced with a Question and Answer function to allow parents the opportunity to ask a question anonymously and for Dr George to answer within the call. In the first instance, we are unsure as to how many people will access the calls and they may need a bit of tweaking. Our intention is to email the links out on Friday morning to allow you to sign into the calls at your convenience. We will also record the sessions and password protect them so they become like a webinar to be listened to at a later time. The themes will be updated regularly and will be along the lines of anxiety, bereavement, mental health in children and many more with further information to follow.

#### Year 4 and 5 iPad scheme

FINALLY!!!! After a meeting this morning and a further meeting this afternoon, we are on the home straight. We have now navigated our way through iPad shortages due to COVID, a Christmas holiday, staff shortage due to COVID (at Jigsaw24) to finally get to a point where it is looking likely we will receive the iPads next week. Once we have a confirmed date we will let you know. We can only apologise for how long it has taken. All of the above is out of our control and we have been messaging three and four times a week to keep the project moving along.

Phewsh...the intention was a short email and again I apologise for the length of the update.  
Hopefully serves a purpose.