



.....putting Every Child Matters into Action

South Gloucestershire Council
Longwell Green Primary School
Ellacombe Road, Longwell Green, Bristol, BS30 9BA
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Headteacher: Mr D Brown

5th January 2021

Remote learning.

Dear Parents and Carers,

Overview

As you know, we have been preparing for remote learning in order to ensure the smooth transition for the children to learn from home during this time. The announcement last night honestly took us all by surprise, having been told up to an including yesterday that closing Primary Schools was a very last resort and something they did not think would happen. This was out of our hands.

We could follow the route of simply sharing external resources such as websites (e.g. BBC) that are generic. This is much easier for schools and some schools are doing this. We want to provide personalised, targeted learning for each of your children and this means that the work involved is much more significant.

Contact

Please know that we are still easily contactable. The class teacher can be reached via Class Dojo and through the usual school channels and my team and I can also be contacted this way. We will be on hand to support you with your child's home learning during this hopefully short period. Please see below about reasonable expectations on teachers in regards to hours of work.

New learning platform

Regarding remote learning, we have secured access to a learning platform called **Microsoft Teams**. You may be familiar with this application from online meetings that you have been part of but it can do much more! By giving your child access to Microsoft Teams, they will also gain access for all Microsoft Office products (Word, Excel, Powerpoint etc) for free!

In addition, the platform will allow your child to submit their work to their teacher and gain feedback for it. As parents, you may be used to working with Microsoft Products and can therefore support your child as they get to grips with it (which they will do very quickly!). For more information, please see the PowerPoint that Mrs Darling, our Deputy Headteacher, has created. The link is: <https://youtu.be/-2G5OcKojCc> and was made to cover a few eventualities.

Attached are instructions which you should follow to set your child up on Teams from any device. From there, your child's class teacher will begin to communicate with your child and set them work. Here's what you can expect from us during this lockdown and in the future if an entire bubble closes:

- 3 or 4 lessons per day with a recorded teacher input.
- Work set which can be completed online and returned online. It can also be printed and completed by hand if you prefer (returned via a photo) but this is less interactive and once you are familiar with how to return work online, we believe you will find it much more straightforward. There is no need for you to print work at home, no work needs to be completed on paper. We will only print work for those families who have no access to internet as discussed in a previous questionnaire. If you have no way of accessing online work, please contact your class teacher to discuss how we will support you.





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- Feedback from the class teacher or teaching assistant for each piece of work.
• We will continue to use Class Dojo to message you and share praise. Academic work will move to Teams.

If after this full lockdown, we are working with a single child isolating it will be very similar, but please remember that the class teacher still will be doing all that is involved in teaching the remainder of the class, which in its own right is of course a full time job! As such, they can't be on call throughout the day, but they will make every effort to speak with your regularly and support as best they are able while teaching for the entire day. For this reason, we have decided that for a single isolated child, (different to this full lockdown) we will not be creating video inputs, this is because it is a very time consuming act and could easily add over an hour a day to the teacher's working hours, which already run for most from 7.30 in the morning until well into the evening at home, before undertaking any additional online tasks. However, during this lockdown we will be providing video inputs, please see above.

When is it starting?

We started the work to set this up before we broke up in the summer and have been working behind the scenes since then. It is a very full suite of resources and this has meant that there has been a lot that our IT provider has had to do to ensure GDPR safety amongst other things. We are aware that some other schools have opted with Google Classroom which is a less full suit, we chose not to do this, as in the end we believe Microsoft will offer more for you at home. Due to the rushed nature of this lockdown, we have had to use our previous system of dojo for today. We hope to have all of the final roll out issues resolved today and hope to have Microsoft Teams running as soon as possible for everyone at home. Please be patient with us at the start! This is a new system for us and we may not get it right first time but we'll get there! We want to continue to work with you as a family team to support the learning for your child and we want to ensure that being absent means that no learning is lost, but we can only achieve this by working together.

How do I get access?

A download guide has been sent with this email. This training video https://youtu.be/IEYwsPIJdWc has been made for the children to watch to see how they can use Teams. You might find it useful too!

Contact times.

The teacher and teaching assistant will work their normal daytime hours so please bear in mind that you may not get instant feedback to work submitted. The teachers will have additional tasks to do to for remote learning on top of what they would usually do, but you can expect to have feedback on either the same day or day after work is submitted.

Please note that I have told my staff that they cannot be on call 24 hours a day 7 days a week, this is unfair on them, remembering also that many too have families with young children, and no-one can be asked to work in this way. However, we want to work with you to support in any ways we can. If something is urgent, then contact the school office (or other agencies if needed such as NHS) instead of your class teacher in the first instance. This is no different to a 'usual' school day. Continue to communicate with your class teacher and school as you would during a usual school day; we will always aim to support in any way we can, I just ask that people be aware that unless it is urgent, staff will not respond out of usual working hours. I hope you understand.

We have asked that work is submitted no later than 3.30 to be marked on the same day, or if later, it will be marked and returned on the next day. This is not because teachers stop work at 3.30 - far from it! Each piece of work takes anywhere from 5 to 15 minutes (sometimes more) to mark, and as teachers are getting used to a new





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online model of marking it is going to take longer still. On a usual day a teacher would use their breaktime, most of their lunchtime and into the evening to mark all of the work.

If everyone in a class hands all of the work in at 3.30, it simply would not be possible for the teacher to mark it in time! If you are able to, please hand work in as you go throughout the day.

This is because in a usual day the teacher will analyse each child's response to each lesson and adjust their lessons for the next session based on this. This is the best way of teaching to the direct needs of your child and so if they are planning the next day's lessons, it helps if they know the areas of success and next steps for each child as they are doing this. We do understand that this will not be possible for everyone due to your own working patterns and of course we will work around you as well, it just may elongate this process, meaning that errors are not addressed immediately in the next lesson.

In summary

It is important to us that we provide coherent and meaningful learning and as I said above, the only way we can achieve this is by working together. We recognise the strain put on families when isolating and even more so when one or more adults also have to work from home. We have tried to balance quality learning, shared in a way that can be delivered easily at home giving you the choice on how much time you dedicate to supporting learning (to a degree, with age and stage taken into account and the fact that primary school children struggle to work completely independently!) alongside not wanting to add undue pressure for you as families at home. As you will see, we have taken the best of our previous lockdown work, listened to feedback from families, evolved our provision and come up with new and hopefully engaging ideas. We will continue to grow and develop our provision as we become greater versed in our new platform but we really do think this is a really strong and engaging provision.

Talk to us if you have difficulty or concerns: we are here to help you as much as we can.

Key message:

- New system Microsoft Teams.
- You can usually work online, there is no need to print out. All work should be done online if at all possible.
- You can access the work and also access all of the Microsoft products such as word, PowerPoint etc. to allow your child to complete the work.
- When you have uploaded the completed work, the teacher will review the work and give feedback, again online.
- There will be 3 or 4 full lessons each day, with teacher input.
- As far as possible teachers will base the next steps in learning on the marked work from the previous day as they would in school.
- Please submit any work to be marked by 3.30 on the day, if it is later than this, it will be marked / feedback will be given on the following day.
- We want to keep open communications and this is the best way to support your child's learning, but please also take into account my staff's own wellbeing in terms of contact; please follow the usual model of communication (office and dojo) as you would have done previously. If something is an emergency, then of course contact us and we will do all we can to help.
- A download guide is due to come out with this letter.

If you have any further questions, please contact us as described above.





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Kind regards,

D Brown and everyone at Longwell Green.

