

A NEWSLETTER FROM



MS ELBOURNE-CLOAD



HEADS UP

8

Tuesday 2 February 2021



As I am sure you will all be aware, the government announced last week that schools would not be back after half-term and not until 8 March at the earliest. We completely understand the disappointment and frustration that this brings to all families, as ideally we would all like schools to be back to normal.

We know how hard this pandemic has hit everyone – many families within our school and staff community have had losses of family and friends and we send our thoughts and condolences to all affected by loss. However, we are now slowly starting to see some light at the end of the tunnel; infection rates are slowly starting to drop and the vaccine roll out continues at pace. So if we can keep on as we have been doing for these last few weeks then hopefully we can count down the days we can all be together again both at home with friends and loved ones, and back at school with children able to access the full range of school activities. We do thank you all for the hard work and support that you are giving to ensure your children are able to learn from home.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to thank all the staff for all their hard work and resilience with organising home learning. I know from the time it takes me to video one assembly how time-consuming every part of setting up the provision is, and that teachers are constantly looking at ways to make the learning engaging and differentiated so that children can access it as independently as possible, whilst still moving their learning on. Last week we had a County Advisor visit for remote learning, who looked at work and teacher marking for all of our year groups. We had very positive feedback and were told that our remote learning provision was of a very good standard. We have also received some lovely comments from parents over the last few weeks- here are just a few:

'I just wanted to send a message to say thank you for all you are doing. We are particularly grateful for all of the lovely messages you write on his pictures and videos.'

'We really appreciate all the hard work teachers put in preparing home learning tasks and doing demos and stories.'

'Thank you for another great week of learning'

'Thank you for all the support and quick responses to any questions.'

'Thank you, thank you, thank you! You and your staff have been phenomenal! We know that no parents can really appreciate what is going on behind the scenes, but from the teachers I know, I imagine you are working longer and harder than ever, whilst still sharing the same worries we all have about keeping your families safe.'

So, now that we know we have at least another 4 weeks of remote learning, we wanted to take the opportunity to review our provision and see how we can develop our offer even further. We took note of all the feedback from the remote learning questionnaire sent to parents, and as a result, every year group has tweaked what they are doing, based on year group focused comments. This ranges from more videos and audio voice-overs, to organizing work in folders, more challenge opportunities etc.

We have tried to ensure that any changes made are ones that will support the majority of pupils. Unfortunately, we are not able to offer some of the more individual requests made. It is also worth noting that, similar to homework questionnaires, there were parents who wanted more or less work, more or less videos, more or less zoom meetings, etc.

The other main change we are making from next week is that all children will be asked to join a small group zoom for one day a week, where they will get more bespoke feedback and support/challenge. This meeting will be on the same day/time each week and teachers will be sharing that information with families this week. Reception children will not be having this additional meeting but instead they will have a pre-recorded personalised message for each child once a week.

We would also like to help the children get ready for the return to school and therefore we would like to ask all children to join for registration zoom meeting each morning. This was more of a voluntary offer in January, and we have noticed reducing numbers of children attending. In order for children to get back in the habit of being ready to learn first thing in the morning and as a way of us monitoring children for safeguarding, it will now be the expectation that all children will attend the morning registration zoom from next week. If there is a problem on the odd occasion which makes it difficult to attend, or if you have a technical issue than please send a message to your teacher for that day (we have already noted those parents we have spoken to individually about an existing issue).

Again, we do know that sometimes things don't go as planned and other factors can get in the way. If some bits of work don't get finished but we can see that your child is regularly working and submitting work then this is fine. Also, if your family are having a particularly stressful time and you need a day away from the pressure of remote learning, please let your teacher know and we will not ask for work that day (obviously not a regular expectation though).

We continue to be mindful about the impacts that this time is having on everyone's mental health. Therefore, each Friday, we will be having Wellbeing afternoon, when we will focus on one of the 5 WOWs to Wellbeing that were shared last week. Suggested activities will be shared, which can be completed in any order and at any time. If you feel that you just need a break, that is fine too. We will also be sharing ideas to support mental health on our school twitter feed to promote Children's Mental Health Week, which started yesterday. Our twitter can be found at [@cunninghamsch](https://twitter.com/cunninghamsch).

In other news, you may have noticed previously that we had an occasional day booked for the 12th March. We have now moved this to the end of the academic year, where we had already allocated an Inset day, so that now the schools will finish on the **20th July 2021**. The hope is that if we are able to go away on holiday by then, finishing 2 days before the official end of term may enable families to benefit from reduced travel costs – I'm sure by then a family break will be very much looked forward to! Also if the schools are back by the end of term we will not finish early on the 26th March, in order to get a full day of learning completed. Please check the website for any other dates.

So lastly, thank you once again for all the hard work from you and your children. I know we can get through this final (hopefully) stretch, if we continue to all work together and support each other and remember that we are all doing our very best that we can do.

Ms Elbourne-Cload