



Five Ways Primary School

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27th April 2020

Dear Parents,

We are now in week 2 of the summer term and it is clear that we will not be returning to school in the very near future and, even when that eventually happens, it is not likely to mean being able to return straight back to normal. As we move through this term I will endeavour to update you regularly. Please see the information detailed below which I hope you will find useful. Thank you for your continued support and the positive messages which we have received at this difficult and unprecedented time.

Polling Day

As I am sure you are aware, the UK Government has postponed the May 2020 elections due to COVID-19. Therefore, school will no longer be required as a Polling Station on **Thursday 7th May 2020**. For this reason, school will remain open on this day, for those pupils whose BOTH parents are key workers and for pupils who are categorised as vulnerable.

Bank Holidays

Whilst the school remains open for a small number of pupils, please note that it will be CLOSED to ALL pupils on Friday 8th May and Monday 25th May. We will be open for those pupils detailed above, during the remaining days of the May half term break.

Home Learning

Like you, we are becoming increasingly aware that the situation we find ourselves in is becoming longer term than we could have ever imagined. As a school, we appreciate that for many parents, working from home and supporting your child's school work is not easy. Please remember, that there is no expectation that you as parents are able to replace teachers.

With this in mind, we believe that what is more important, is maintaining a degree of normality, rather than carrying the additional burden of worrying about your child's progress in English or maths. Home-schooling should be about parents helping your child/ren create regular routines and learning habits.

We appreciate that recreating the school environment at home is very difficult however, there are things you can do to make the experience relatively rewarding and stress-free:

- Set a routine - if possible, have children dressed and breakfasted by 08:30am on weekdays - this will help them adjust when school reopens



- Identify a set time of day when you will help your child/ren with projects, and other times when they can do things by themselves
- To avoid children losing key academic skills - such as reading, writing and mathematics - aim to make these the most important daily sessions.

Many parents have asked how much schoolwork their child should be doing each day. Obviously, how much depends on how young your child is however, as a guide, if your child can stay focused for between an hour and three hours a day that would be beneficial. Guidance from teaching unions suggests children do no more than three hours' work a day, depending upon their age. However, it is also important to remember that as parents, you should not worry too much about how much time your child spends learning. It is much better to have a really successful hour where your child enjoys their work, than three hours whereby you and your child become frustrated. Our advice is to not put too much pressure upon yourself as parents or your child/ren; instead work for shorter periods more often, rather than working in long blocks.

As a guide, in terms of expectations for your child/ren, we would recommend daily reading practice if possible, along with regular maths revision and spelling revision. Finding real opportunities to write would also be very beneficial. The more learning that can be built into everyday activities the better, such as letter writing to a relative.

We are aware that a lot of suggested activities and online platforms have been recommended to you, and for some parents, it may be difficult to decide which resource is the best to use with your child/ren. As a school, we would strongly advise choosing activities from your child's year group section on our 'Home Learning' page of our school website, or lessons from BBC Bitesize or Oak National Academy.

Our 'Home Learning' website page can be accessed here: <https://www.fiveways-primary-school.org.uk/home-learning>

Oak National Academy can be accessed here: <https://www.thenational.academy/online-classroom>

BBC Bitesize can be accessed here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

In addition, the Government has produced guidance for parents to help primary school children continue their education during coronavirus. This is a helpful guide and may answer many questions that parents might have. The link to this guidance is as follows:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-primary-school-children-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Furthermore, try also using this time to help your child/ren acquire life skills - such as hanging out the washing or stacking the dishwasher. Make the most of the opportunity to talk to each other more, for example, by trying to have lunch together every day. It is important to remember that reading together, enjoying walks, cooking, gardening and playing board games are all valuable learning experiences. We know that juggling working from home or managing looking after your family is a huge challenge at the moment, and appreciate all of the things that you are doing to support your child/ren.



Communication with Friends

Apart from missing lessons, it is important to remember that school has a social function for children. As with adults, children's relationships with their friends are heavily restricted by lockdown regulations. Encourage your child/ren to keep in contact with their friends as much as possible however, please remain vigilant regarding the safe use of social media, age restrictions that are in place with some forms of online communication and the dangers associated with the use of some Apps.

Communication with School

It has been lovely to see the photographs that have been emailed into school and showcased on the 'Gallery' page of our school website. We are currently considering other ways in which pupils and their classteachers can begin making contact with each other. In the first instance, I am pleased to make you aware that each classteacher is in the process of preparing a letter for their class, to check on well-being, celebrate the successes of home learning and share some news about what they have been doing since school closed for the vast majority of pupils. It is hoped that this letter will be emailed home at the end of this week, and that further letters will follow in the future.

We are also exploring ways in which pupils and parents can contact classteachers while we are not in school. This is something that will require careful consideration, to ensure we continue to comply with safeguarding regulations. As soon as I have further information regarding this, I will update you.

End of Year Reports

Due to the unprecedented times in which we find ourselves, we are currently making some changes to our End of Year reports. You may find that comments are a little less detailed than you would be used to for an annual report; we hope that you can understand that this is because our teachers are not currently in school teaching your children and so these comments will be based on any work done prior to the closure of schools in March. I will provide a further update regarding your child's End of Year report in the forthcoming weeks.

Keeping Safe Online

Please continue to do everything you can to keep your child/ren safe online at this time when they are likely to be using the internet and social media even more than normal. They will not have the filtering system that we have in school to protect them from accessing harmful websites. There is lots of advice available for parents including the following:

- [Childline](#) - for support
- [CEOP](#) - for advice on making a report about online abuse
- [Thinkuknow](#) provides advice from the National Crime Agency (NCA) on staying safe online
- [Parent info](#) is a collaboration between Parentzone and the NCA providing support and guidance for parents from leading experts and organisations
- [Childnet](#) offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support



- [Internet matters](#) provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices, and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- [London Grid for Learning](#) has support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) has support for parents and carers from the NSPCC, including a guide to social networks, apps and games
- [Let's Talk About It](#) has advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) has tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online, including parental controls offered by home internet providers and safety tools on social networks and other online services.

Return to School

We have no information as yet regarding when this might be. In the meantime, we would like to reassure you that whenever it is we will do our utmost to ensure extremely high standards of cleanliness and the safety of our children is paramount. Full details about how we will manage safety will be communicated with you in due course, once official guidance from the Government is received. We would like to thank all of our families for your support at this difficult time whilst children are safer at home.

I do hope that you and your families remain safe and well. I will continue to send you regular updates as time goes on.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Rachel Mander
Headteacher

