



Homefield Church of England Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

22nd April 2020

Re: Coronavirus Update – Summer Term

I hope this finds you all well and you enjoyed your Easter celebrations, despite the current situation. We are officially now in the Summer term of this school year and I wanted to pass on a few messages.

Teachers will be trying to make phone contact with each family over the course of the coming weeks. We miss you all very much and just want to check you are all okay. Please be aware that class teachers will be ringing from home so this phone call will come up as a 'private number' or number with 'no caller ID'. We will try a few times, so if we do not get through straight away please do not worry if you miss our call. However, if it gets to the end of next week (Friday 1st May) and you have not heard from your child's class teacher then do send an email to the class teacher with your contact details and we will call you back as it may be that we do not have the most up to date phone number for you.

Let me emphasise, this is absolutely not a 'checking up' but a 'checking in' phone call – we care deeply about our children and our families and want to help if we can. Teachers would love to speak to the children as it is just not the same being a teacher behind a computer screen – we miss their voices and their stories – so if you have more than one child in the school you will receive a call from each child's class teacher.

If you need to get in touch with us for any reason, the best way is to email the class teachers or pastoral support officer on the addresses already given out. Please note, the school office phones are not always manned so please leave a message if you need to and we will endeavour to get back to you as swiftly as possible.

I also wanted to write to you to give you further guidance and support regarding home learning, as I know there are many conflicting messages out there on social media at the moment. However much we are trying to shield our little ones from the news and the adult worry over the current situation, they will pick up on this. Now is not the time for stressing over rigid routines or current methods, frantically completing worksheets or spending hours trying to get onto online learning platforms. Stressed adults cannot teach stressed children; that is a fact! Do some home learning each day and do your best. Focus, as well, on connections and feelings of safety. Share your calm, share your strength and share your laughter. Protect your and your children's mental health and well-being. That way, they will be ready to learn when they return to school – we can and will get them back on track.

Currently, we are putting together home learning packs for collection, which is to overcome the problems some are experiencing with printing, Internet or lack of screens when you have multiple children. We will compile these and text you to let you know when these are ready to be picked up. We will leave these in class labelled boxes outside our foyer, so you simply need to pop in and pick them up without the need to come into contact with anyone. In the first instance, please only collect one if you are experiencing any of the problems mentioned, as we wish to keep the number of people coming on to our site down for safety.



I cannot emphasise enough how important it is NOT to try to replicate school at home.

The activities that we have set for home learning are for you to use to keep the pupils' skills fresh and active. Staff are working very hard to upload challenges and activities to our website, Tapestry and Facebook that are linked to current learning, which should be fun and simple to complete at home.

However, do not be tempted to join the 'competition' that is currently raging on social media across the country. Your child will not fall behind; they are exactly where they need to be – at home, staying safe.

Our websites also contain a number of links to other possible learning materials (including the BBC Bitesize daily lessons that have been launched this week, PE links, phonics video links etc.), documents regarding where to go for help if you need it and online safety. Do have a browse!

Other ideas that may be useful:

- A bit of reading every day (independent, together, to them, or via an audiobook – Audible have free listens at the moment)
- Some free writing now and then. If they will keep a diary, or draw a comic, great. Alternatively, perhaps they can help you write a shopping list or a letter to a friend. Make it fun – use role-play, for example. Perhaps they can take your order in a restaurant or create instructions for how to use the washing machine! If you fancy a family film, can they write tickets for the 'cinema', signage and price lists for popcorn and snacks? Maybe they could write a review afterwards or their ideas for an alternative ending or sequel.
- Practical, hands on maths. Be that via cooking, cleaning, playing outside or some maths games.
- Some fine motor work – Lego or construction, cutting, playdough, tidying up small toys.
- Physical exercise every day – Joe Wicks is doing a daily PE session, but there are others available if you want something to follow. On the other hand, how about setting up an obstacle course? However, a good, old-fashioned walk or bike ride works too, as long as you are following social distancing guidelines.
- Some opportunities to be creative – art, music. This does not need guidance; children generally love to be creative. Boredom is also a good stimulus for creativity – do not feel you need to fill every hour of every day.
- Lots and lots of imaginative play – independently is good, but feel free to join in!

The most important thing you can all do at this time is to spend quality time together as a family. Bake, play games, build a tent in the living room, cuddle up together and read, do a puzzle, build together with Lego, take the chance to sit and have a chat: the list goes on. Let this be a positive memory for them in a scary time for us all.

We do not want parents to feel under any pressure, particularly those parents of key workers, this is not a competition and no one is doing a 'better job' than anyone else is. Many of our team are parents too so we fully understand the challenges of trying to entertain our children whilst working from home too – we are all in this together!

Above all, remember you are doing enough. You are loving your children and supporting them through a difficult time. We hope to see you very soon – but in the meantime, look after yourselves and each other.

Stay safe and stay home!

Yours faithfully,

Mr. B. Young
Headteacher

