



The White Rose Federation

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Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you for your support, patience and rapid response to our correspondence this week. Whilst this is our second experience of a lockdown, the parameters have changed and I'm sure that you have also experienced significant challenges since Monday evening. In school, we have been responding as quickly as possible to government directives and I am writing to share our thoughts and plans for the upcoming weeks ahead.

Appropriate communication

I wanted to start by highlighting how shocked I have been when reading Facebook posts from parents at other schools, who are already making negative comments about the remote learning offers in place at their child's school. Screen shots of learning and attacks on the teachers have been a common occurrence, leading to increased staff absence at these schools.

I am grateful that the relationship that we have with our families ensures that parents come to us if they have any concerns rather than resort to naming and shaming on social media and I ask that our positive relationship continues. Staff availability, readiness to roll out IT and limited availability of laptops at home in larger families are just some of the reasons why schools have a different approach to providing remote learning. Whilst our vision for remote learning is evolving at pace (see further in the letter for more information), I do feel for other schools who are experiencing a different road. As we continue our journey to meet the new guidelines imposed by the government, which will have its ups and downs as we navigate new territory, I remind everyone to think first and when in doubt, be kind.

When will lockdown end?

Whilst the Prime Minister stated that he intends for lockdown to end at half term, there have already been whispers in the media that it may continue until March. We have not been given any other information than what has been shared in the media but we are preparing for it to go past half term. We have had enquiries from parents, who have shared that they may wish to take a school place in a few weeks depending on Covid rates and mental health. I advise that parents follow the local information regarding Covid levels near the school, inputting the school postcode, and use this to help inform your decision.

The information can be found at: <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>

Barlow post code: YO8 8ES Burton Salmon Post code: LS25 5JY Chapel Haddlesey post code: YO8 8QF

Nursery Children

We received updated guidance last night which clearly stated that school nurseries should remain open and should continue to allow all nursery-aged children to attend full time or their usual timetabled hours. The key worker and vulnerable criteria does not apply to parents of a child in nursery. If you have a child in nursery and

you would like to return to the setting, then you are more than welcome. Please email the admin email address at your school and they will inform staff.

Seesaw

Children across the federation have engaged well with Seesaw and staff are evolving their teaching to try and make it more interactive. Thank you for engaging with the email function to reach out to staff members; it has helped them to respond quickly to allow your child to access the learning with limited delay.

In terms of how long your child should be on Seesaw, please use your judgment with your child. The amount of remote education that should be provided changed yesterday and is now as follows:

Key Stage 1: 3 hours a day on average across the cohort, with less for younger children

Key Stage 2: 4 hours a day

It does not have to be all at once and it can be in short bursts.

If your child is at school, they will access the Seesaw content during the day. It will most likely be in paper form so please be reassured that you do not need to do the online learning with them for the days that they are in school.

Moving to a 'live' learning option

Our aim is to offer live, interactive teaching to children over the next 2 weeks. We ordered TEAMS 365 before the summer holidays as a live tool to complement the learning on Seesaw. Our schools have been in a queue to complete this set up, with the IT team busily working behind the scenes, so much so, that I'm pleased to share that we are nearly ready to launch. This will allow for each child to log in to TEAMS with their own email address and they will be able to have a face to face input with their class teacher, reducing the burden on parents to explain tasks each day. They will also be able to see or hear their friends and talk about their learning.

Whilst this is an exciting move forward, it isn't without its considerations in terms of the acceptable use of IT and we will send clear rules and expectations to families next week. We will start with daily whole class welcomes and lunchtime check backs. Once this is established, we will also move to teacher inputs, for no longer than 20 minutes, potentially shorter for younger children. We will not be in a position to offer hour-long and morning-long teaching sessions. This is because online learning is incredibly draining for children; they cannot engage for this long and also because the teachers have still to teach in the classroom. A more suitable balance will be required.

Further information about TEAMS 365 will be shared with the children and parents in years 5/6 at each school later next week, with the aim to roll it out to the other years groups following feedback and adaptations to suit the age ranges of the children in the younger year groups. If you have any concerns about your child using TEAMS, please read through the information that we will send you and then contact your child's class teacher to talk it through.

Yours sincerely,



Suzanne MacDonald
Executive Headteacher