

Hi everyone

What a week it has been! We really are navigating through some really challenging times aren't we?

We are beginning to settle into our new routine. Quite clearly we have far more children in during this lockdown than we did during the last one, and in some year groups we are not able to keep numbers as low as we would like if we are to meet all the requests we have for places. Last lockdown we were asked to keep bubbles to 15 - this is proving impossible this time, even with three bubbles rather than one. We feel that we owe it to the children that are at home to have one teacher available to lead the home learning each week which is working really well. However, if numbers increase further we will be forced to open up all classes and this will compromise the home learning. So please do make sure that you are only using places if it is absolutely essential - we are already having to limit our offer to some parents which we have not had to do before. Equally, we need to make sure we are not judging those who are using the places if we don't fully understand their home situation.

With regard to home learning please remember that if your child is in school they will be completing exactly the same learning that we are providing for children at home. Therefore if they are in school on a Monday and a Tuesday for example, you will only need to complete the home learning for a Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. In years 1 and 2 SeeSaw is being used much more for learning tutorials and so it is really important that you are at least able to access these - SeeSaw can be downloaded onto a phone for example if you don't have a spare laptop. And even if your child is in school five days a week it is really important that they also have access to SeeSaw as this is how they can keep in touch with their teacher and share other work that they might do at home.

I have to say that yesterday I hit a low point when I heard the Education Secretary suggest that parents should complain to Ofsted if they were not happy with the home learning their child's school was providing. It felt like a punch in the stomach when we have literally been doing everything in our power to make sense of the mess we found ourselves in at the start of this term. I worked the whole of last weekend to ensure that children could return to school on Monday, having been assured schools were safe, only to be told on Monday evening that schools were suddenly not safe. Luckily our school community have been nothing but supportive during this whole crisis and I know that you appreciate that our staff are working even harder than they normally would, teaching, planning home learning and responding to all the wonderful work that your children are producing. Many of them are themselves anxious, and feel vulnerable, but they have no choice but to come in and work and they do it because they care. I know you appreciate that.

I hope you don't mind me sharing this (or over sharing maybe!) but I always try to be open and honest with you about any situation. We are all fine and the children in school are happy and learning well.

With love from
Jacky