

St John's Upper Holloway CE Primary – Parent update 23rd March 2020

Dear parents,

I just wanted to send a quick letter to you as most of you will have your children at home and be trying to help them with their learning while still juggling all your usual jobs and chores. I hope that the following will provide a little guidance for all you – both those with children at home and those with children still attending school.

Support for home learning

All children should have started the activities in their 'home learning pack' today. Remember, the activities in this pack are for the whole week and it is better to do a little learning each day rather than rush through all the activities as quickly as possible. The cover letter from the teacher should set out what your child should be doing each day.

I have asked teachers to make regular contact with parents through parent mail and blogs for the older children on Purple Mash. You should also shortly receive the email address of your child's teacher so that you can contact them with any questions you have about your child's learning. Teachers will be checking emails every day and will support you as well as they can. We realise parents are busy and are not trained to introduce new concepts around learning so we have tried to keep the tasks simple and reinforce much of what has been covered already this year.

A few parents have not taken or collected their 'home learning packs' so we will try to drop those off to your houses today and tomorrow. It will help us greatly if you can collect them as, I'm sure you can understand, all staff are very busy with other tasks.

School for key workers and vulnerable families

We are open for a small number of children whose parents work in key roles such as health workers and teachers. While they are in, we will be supporting them with the tasks in their home learning packs as well as enjoying a range of creative and sports activities. We will be trying our best to minimise the risk to these children through regular handwashing, cleaning of surfaces and spacing children out in different classrooms throughout the day.

As it was the first day of this new approach, we are looking at ways in which we can refine and improve what we do to keep children safe whilst still maintaining an environment that feels as 'normal' as we can. However, there may be times when children do come into contact with each other which is almost unavoidable in a school setting. We are therefore asking parents to think carefully about whether they do have other people who can look after their children if they feel this would be a safer option than school. We realise this is a difficult decision and are happy to talk with parents about this further if that would help.

Looking ahead

Teachers are working together to try to ensure that there is a consistency about the work we are going to set for your children next week. Reading, writing and maths are the most important tasks but we also hope to provide you with ideas for creative and sporty tasks you can do at home.

We do not anticipate being open over the Easter holidays but will try to find out if there are any Easter 'holiday clubs' that are open nearby and give you the details as soon as possible. Teachers will also set some holiday learning projects that are fun but link to their topics.

Parent action group

Last Friday, a number of parents met to discuss the challenges that many families are going to face in the coming days and weeks, including financially.

We will be sending out details tomorrow of some of the things we discussed and how you can register to support those in the school community who may need help.

Yours sincerely

Brian Welsh

Head teacher