

**WESTERN ROAD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
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Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are all keeping well during this difficult time.

As you may be aware, the Prime Minister has stated schools will not return to being fully open until after half-term. He has said that the Government will review the position by 22<sup>nd</sup> February and promised to give us two weeks' notice after that before schools fully reopen. A potential reopening date is therefore 8<sup>th</sup> March. We all have to wait and see whether schools will reopen then.

In the meantime, staff are working on site and remotely using Tapestry (EYFS) and Seesaw (Years 1 – 6) to support those children learning from home, just as you are working hard to support your children and manage your stressful lives. We continue to keep the school open for a significant number of vulnerable children and those of keyworkers.

The children in school and those learning at home are following the National Curriculum and our curriculum maps. These lessons are sequenced and revise previously learned skills and knowledge and introduce new concepts. Each day there are at least three pre-recorded videos available for English, phonics/Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling and Maths along with explanations for the reading and foundation tasks. The activities can then be completed and uploaded at appropriate times to allow the staff to give personalised feedback each day. We would encourage all children to use a combination of typing skills and handwriting to complete tasks. We would also encourage all children to take regular breaks away from the learning screens and have access to exercise and fresh air each day. I attach the home-school learning agreement which may help to clarify certain areas too.

We are very aware you are juggling a huge amount when supporting your child to learn at home. The lessons are pre-recorded to enable children and parents to re-watch aspects as needed and to allow the learning to fit in with family schedules.

We are, however, doing our best to find a balance between pre-recorded learning and live contact. We have, therefore, organised weekly live checkins with each class using Microsoft Teams. For safeguarding purposes, each checkin has two members of staff present. The Teams meetings enable children to see their friends, share their learning and things they are proud of and to play a game, for example a scavenger hunt. These checkins are a lovely way for the class to stay in contact with each other and their teacher. We are looking at ways we can increase these checkins to support home learners and will communicate these plans with each class as soon as possible.

We know that the current arrangements will be as much as many children, and parents, can manage. For those of you whose children would like to do more, you can access excellent lessons through Oak Academy

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and BBC Bitesize which are referenced on our school website, remote learning section along with a number of other useful resources.

Due to families supporting with home learning, we were unable to hold a live virtual Parent Forum this term. However, the Co-Chair and I have been in contact and have asked for feedback from each class through the parent representatives. SLT has worked closely with Governors to look at the feedback and consider how we can further support families during this time. I have written to the Co-Chair who will in turn share the school's response with the class representatives.

We miss our Western Road families terribly and look forward to seeing you all again soon.

With best wishes,

Irèna Wooler