



Wednesday 20th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Remote Learning Provision at Barrow Hedges Primary School

I hope this finds you safe and well in this period of a third national lockdown. Thank you to parents for your support and cooperation with all the revised arrangements for this term.

Now that we have completed the first two weeks of this term, where the vast majority of our pupils are learning at home, and we are once again adjusting to another 'new normal', I am writing to provide some further explanation and clarity around our provision for remote learning.

Firstly, we have been delighted with the current levels of engagement in both Tapestry (Nursery and Reception) and Microsoft Teams (Years 1 to 6). We are extremely proud of how well the children have adapted to learning in this way. It has been lovely for teachers to speak with the children and hear about how things are going.

The feedback we are receiving from parents about our remote learning has been so positive. Thank you to those of you who have taken the time to contact us. I am so very proud of the staff team who are working tirelessly teaching the children in school, as well as planning and preparing all the lessons and activities for children at home – and of course, getting used to being in front of the camera and all the technology that comes with this!

Hopefully, you would have already seen from what we have put in place that we have been well prepared with regards to remote learning. That said, as with all new things, there may be 'teething problems' and we are always keen to receive feedback as part of the continual monitoring and evaluation of our provision. Therefore, we are currently creating a parent survey which will be sent out shortly. Clearly, time is precious, but I hope that you will be able to participate so that we have a full picture of what is working well and what may require further consideration.

We very much recognise the challenges parents are facing at the moment and know that home schooling is a major challenge for many. However, schools are required to remind parents that their child must be in receipt of an education, follow the school's curriculum and understand the school's provision for remote learning.

Therefore, I would like to draw your attention to the following important points:



Harbury Road Carshalton Surrey SM5 4LA

Telephone 020 8643 4428
office@barrowhedges.com



- The Department for Education has stipulated that schools should teach a planned and well-sequenced curriculum so that knowledge and skills are built incrementally, with a good level of clarity about what is intended to be taught and practised in each subject so that pupils can progress through the school's curriculum.
- The school's remote curriculum should be aligned as close as possible to the in-school curriculum.
- The remote education provided should be equivalent in length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school and could include recorded or live direct teaching time, and time for pupils to complete tasks and assignments independently. The amount of remote education provided should be, as a minimum: Key Stage 1: 3 hours a day on average across the cohort, with less for younger children and Key Stage 2: 4 hours a day.
- In liaison and collaboration with our colleagues, and in examining Ofsted's *'What's Working Well in Remote Education'* guidance document, we have agreed upon the following over-arching principles for the provision of remote learning as a group of schools within Cirrus Primary Academy Trust:
 - The aim of education is to deliver a high-quality curriculum so that pupils know more and remember more. Remote education is one way of doing so.
 - This means that everything we know about what a quality curriculum looks like still applies. The remote education curriculum is aligned to the classroom curriculum as much as possible. And, just like the classroom curriculum, it is carefully sequenced and ensures that pupils obtain the building blocks they need to move on to the next step. For this reason, it is important that children do complete the learning activities which are set by the school. Just as would be the case when schools are ordinarily open, all children on roll at Barrow Hedges should be taught the school's curriculum. Where parents opt out of this then they are formally electing to home educate. At this present time, children who are not following our curriculum will be missing out and when schools re-open it will be harder for them to catch up.
 - Where children are undertaking work set by tutors, this should be additional to the prescribed curriculum. This work is not validated by the school and therefore it would be difficult for us to assess whether children are in receipt of a full education as is the law.
 - Just as we don't need 'all-singing, all-dancing' lessons in the classroom, remote education often benefits from a straightforward and easy-to-use interface. Simple graphics that highlight the key concepts and features we want to teach can be most effective. That said, we try to ensure our lessons are as engaging and memorable as possible.
 - We may need to adapt our subject curriculum when moving to remote education, for example because some topics are hard to teach remotely.
 - We will continue to provide pre-recorded lessons. Perhaps the biggest advantage of pre-recorded lessons is accessibility. In many homes, there aren't suitable devices for all children to access lessons at the same time. One laptop can't serve three children who all have live lessons simultaneously, but it might give access to lessons that they can get on demand. There can also be a problem with the amount of bandwidth streaming that live lessons require, and this often becomes an issue when children are trying to join live lessons at the same time that parents are trying to have virtual meetings.

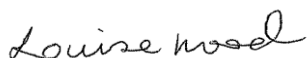
- Pre-recorded lessons also mean that pupils can pause, rewind and re-visit explanations they have struggled with, which, of course, would be an incredibly useful feature to have in the classroom all the time! Teachers don't need to repeat an instruction a dozen times; children/parents can check back for themselves.
- By pre-recording, teachers can think more carefully about the quality of explanation and more easily build in video clips and other animations that help to bring the explanation to life. Their concentration is entirely on the material produced rather than on what everyone else in the session is doing.
- In the classroom, we can direct a pupil's wavering attention, we can pose questions with ease and purpose, we can judge how work is going and where we need to change the pace. A virtual classroom is a very poor proxy for this space.
- As it's harder for pupils to concentrate when being taught remotely, we recognise that it's often a good idea to divide content into smaller chunks. Short presentations or modelling of new content will be followed by exercises or retrieval practice.
- Low-stakes quizzes will be built into our remote education, as can written assignments and retrieval practice activities. It can be helpful to make sure pupils are 'warmed up' and 'readied' for content through an introductory task or scene-setting. Pupils can then be invited to re-visit and process the main content further in an additional task or later lesson through retrieval practice.

We are also required to publish a document entitled 'Providing Remote Education – Information for Parents' on our school website and this will be uploaded next weekend.

As above, we do very much recognise the challenges that home schooling brings and we are doing our very best to support families at this time. We would politely remind parents that Tapestry and Teams are fine for 'quick queries' but it is worth remembering that, just as we would not discuss individual concerns about a child in an open forum, it is preferable for parents to use the school office email (office@barrowhedges.com) to raise any concerns they may have. And, of course, our forthcoming survey will enable us to evaluate what is working well and what may need tweaking.

Thank you for your ongoing support - stay safe and well.

Kind regards



Mrs Louise Wood

Headteacher