
22nd January 2020

Dear Parents,

Following the Government's latest decision that schools should only be offering face to face teaching for vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers, schools have been working incredibly hard to offer engaging and accessible remote learning for those pupils not in school. We recognize that whilst schools and teachers have been working hard to get home learning in place to reach children who are not able to attend school, we understand the hard work of parents and carers who are supporting their children at home. Thank you for your commitment towards your child's education; it is valued and appreciated.

The Department for Education (DfE) have released clear guidance in relation to remote learning:

"...remote education provided should be equivalent in length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school and will include both 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*
- *Key Stage 2: 4 hours a day*
- *Key Stages 3 and 4: 5 hours a day."*

Schools in West Sussex vary enormously in both their type and size and both staffing and technology. As a result, practice may vary from setting to setting according to the number of pupils they have and the staffing capacity. We ask that the way in which home learning is provided, how it involves technology and also the range of activities offered is recognised as varying between schools and also between classes and year groups within schools. Each school is unique and, more importantly, the form of home learning will vary depending on the content and both themes and objectives being taught. Schools are basing their decisions on their knowledge and understanding of pupils, parents and the wider community. Ultimately, all schools are doing their best in these challenging times. The following list provides some background information which everyone will find useful:

- Remote learning does not necessarily mean 'live' lessons. Whilst some schools may offer 'live' lessons, these are not always practical or the best way of engaging children in activity. Recorded lessons, videos or voice-over narrations can be equally effective and allow pupils to pause, rewind or re-watch should they need to do so.
- Remote learning does not always mean using laptops and other devices – some schools are offering a 'blended' learning approach where paper-based packs are also being sent home to support pupils.
- The breadth of a curriculum in school also includes physical activity, exploring play, painting or drawing, and also making models, following recipes etc., all of a practical nature which are as important as pencil and paper activities and tasks set by the school.

- Pupils can be more engaged and motivated when they have virtual face to face interaction with their teacher/s. Whilst schools are providing opportunities for these sessions, it does not necessarily mean direct live teaching; it could be to provide input for a lesson, share examples of modelled work, give feedback on learning tasks, read a story, sharing successes or simply to say 'hello' and check-in with their pupils.
- When lessons are being prepared and delivered, teachers are aiming to provide appropriate resources to aid accessibility wherever possible. Some resources may be provided by the school, but your child might be signposted to external resources. It is perfectly acceptable for schools to use BBC Bitesize, the Oak National Academy or White Rose Maths for example.
- Lessons will encourage independent work and we would expect time to be allocated within home learning planned by the school for pupils to work on their own to complete set tasks.

If you have any questions regarding your child's remote learning, please do contact your child's school in the first instance to resolve any concerns.

We understand that learning at home is not easy, with many parents juggling their own work commitments alongside supporting their children with their education. As every family setup is unique, it is crucial that parents look after themselves as well as their children. Find a routine that works for you and your family; please remember that 'non-live' lessons give parents the flexibility to plan their child's learning alongside their own work schedule.

The following websites may be helpful for parents if you need support with safer working practices whilst children are spending more time online:

National Education Union - <https://coronavirusandschools.org.uk/learning-outside-school/>

NSPCC - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Connect Safely - <https://www.connectsafely.org/parentguides/>

Internet matters app guides - <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/apps-guide/>

UK safer internet site social media guides - <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/social-media-guides>

SWGFL YouTube guide - <https://swgfl.org.uk/magazine/a-parents-guide-to-youtube-restricted-mode/>

For more general information about ways to stay safe online, visit our web-pages <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/crime-prevention/staying-safe-online/#online-safety-advice>

Yours sincerely

Paul Wagstaff

Director of Education & Skills