

Frettenham Primary School
Hainford Primary School
Horsford Primary School
Old Catton Junior School
White Woman Lane School
St. Faiths' Primary School



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Dear Parents and Carers

As I'm sure you will have heard, the Prime Minister has announced that it will not be possible to resume face-to-face learning immediately after the February half term and instead *hopes* it will be safe to commence the re-opening of schools from Monday 8 March. This is in response to the national public health data and pressure on NHS capacity. This is due to be reviewed again in mid-February when the Government will look at when more pupils can be brought back into schools. We have been assured that this time we will be given at least two weeks' notice to prepare for a return to face-to-face education and we will of course keep you informed too.

This half term has again tested the resilience, teamwork and creativity of all of us. The remote learning is set up and many technical challenges have been overcome meaning that some lessons are live and children reunited with their teachers, albeit remotely. Across our schools, we have a large number of children accessing the in-school provision and our staff have risen to the challenge of ensuring that the quality of learning is as strong for those in school as well as those learning from home. None of this happens without incredible hard work, time and relentless 'can do' attitudes - a sincere thank you to all of you who are supporting us and your children at this very difficult time.

We know that getting the right balance of how we support you with home learning is not easy and we want everyone to know that 'Your best is good enough'. We know some days are better than others are and we know families are fitting in learning when they can. And that is ok. Please do what is best for you and your family.

I want to take a moment to 'big up' everyone who are working tirelessly to keep their children learning from home (children, parents, Grandparents, staff - anyone supporting us with home learning). We appreciate everything you're doing and know what a struggle it is to support your children with their schoolwork while trying to do your own work or just trying to preserve your house as a relaxing home.

Please remember that we're here to help in any way that we can. We don't want you to be under any unnecessary pressure. If there is anything that we need to change – tell us. If you have any technical issues please do ask and we will support however we can. If you can't make it onto any of the online meetings, we won't judge you. We will phone to check that everything is OK - but we respect the fact that there may be any number of reasons that you can't get to the meetings.

Remember that you are the real heroes for your children. They learn just by being in your company – talking, sharing a book or a film or just eating at the table. If that's all you manage to do some days – don't feel guilty – we're all in this together.

Well done to all the home schoolers out there and thank you for all you are doing. A huge thank you to our staff who are planning and delivering the learning, answering questions, offering support and making the experience as close to a classroom based experience as they can. It is all very much appreciated.

Apologies, for the length of this letter. There is information, top tips and support that I would like to share, in the hope that it will be helpful for you and your families.

Some Learning is live!

Last time there were links and tasks for you to do. This time, the children are getting a wide range of lessons delivered live by their own teacher wherever possible. This means they know your child and their ability and needs and can address them appropriately.

Our homes are on loan to the DfE for now, but they will be our homes again one day

Learning Live - Top Tips and Requests

- **Separate school time and home time**
Leave the house for a few minutes after breakfast and before the start of the school day (in the garden?) – come back through the door ready for ‘school’. Then do the same thing in reverse at the end of ‘school’ whenever that might be. Complete schoolwork in a room that is not the child’s bedroom. The bedroom then remains their home sanctuary place.
- **Consider your child wearing a school jumper or polo shirt when joining in live lessons.**
You may wonder why, but it gives the feel of being in class and stops the children being distracted and staff from policing inappropriate outfits etc. and children not to have others doing this either.
- **If your child is joining live, please be there at the beginning of the session.**
This makes things easier for everyone and stops the learning being disrupted. Being on time is important, just as if you were physically at school.
- **Don’t compare your child to others.**
It doesn’t matter if other children are doing harder/easier work than yours, or if they can do it quicker or neater. It is not a competition. All that matters is that your child makes progress from their own starting point. Your child’s teacher will know best how to direct them and what they can do and which pieces of work or tasks they should be doing. We are running the lessons like we would in class, with teachers maintaining the pace we would in class.
- **Let your child do their work.**
It is really important you do not ‘over help’ your child, tell them the answers or correct spellings etc. We need to see what your child can do independently. We know, looking at some work, that children have been ‘over helped’ with the answers. They will spell words incorrectly, that is a part of learning. They will get some answers wrong. That is a part of the learning process. And it is OK for them to do that. As teachers, we need to know what they cannot do independently so we can teach them how to. The important thing about learning is that the ‘how to’ do it sticks in their long term memory, and it won’t if they are over supported with the answers and not allowed to make mistakes.
- **Don’t expect your child to be chosen to give an answer or share their work every time.**
There is no way this can happen with up to 30 plus children on the calls, and it would not happen in school either. The children know this. If they have an idea, we use mini whiteboards in school so they feel they have shared it and it is valued. You could use these or even a sheet of paper and say tell me afterwards. You can even photograph it and send it in. Learning you have to take a turn is a valuable part of life, but learning you have been valued even if you have not been heard is also important.
- **Please don’t interrupt when the teacher is teaching.**
The year groups will have shared how to ask for help if needed. Some classes are asking children to physically put their hand up so they can be seen; some are asking them to use chat. All of our staff in different schools and year groups will reinforce their way of working, as it will depend very much on the age of the children involved. If you as a parent wish to speak to the teacher, please organise this at a different time. Please call or email the school.
- **Please be mindful of the language and behaviour of yourself and others in the room/home.**
We know it is a challenge but we have had more than one occasion where adults or older siblings have been overheard using language we would not expect to hear in a classroom. We know you are all in your own homes, but when you are on live lessons, you are in our classrooms with children, so

please just be careful. We are all human and make mistakes, but keep it at the front of your mind when live lessons are on. If we see or hear anything inappropriate then we will remove the child from the lesson and they will not be readmitted for the session.

- **Prioritise the lessons if needed.**

We are providing the full curriculum for all children but we know it might not be possible for everyone to access all of it. Prioritise if necessary. We would advise the maths and English lessons as a bare minimum, and then look at others if you can. If you can do them all, that's great, if you prioritise and focus on others, that's great too! Teachers feedback every week on who has accessed and submitted work, as we are required to do and children are expected to engage with the learning, but we know all circumstances are different. The full curriculum offer is there, just as it would be in school.

- **Remember the teachers are live teaching their class, live broadcasting that lesson to critical worker children, responding to all requests, and marking work.**

Written feedback on your child's work will not always be provided but all work will be acknowledged and sometimes feedback will be done verbally in the lesson. We have had such a great amount of support and appreciation for which we are so grateful. Thank you for your ongoing support.

- **Reflect on how well you have done!**

This is new for all of us, and the children are engaging, they are learning and they are keeping in touch with their classmates and the adults in school. If you are doing everything you can, then that is great! Write down 5 things that went well today – at the end of the week you will have 25!

- **Take a screen break.**

That is for children and adults! When you can, get outside and take a stroll if possible as your daily exercise if it works for you. Also, remember break time and lunchtime in the 'school' routine.

Free School Meals

The government will now continue to provide support for pupils eligible for benefits-related free school meals through the national voucher scheme or food boxes to those learning at home during term time next half term. Vouchers have also been ordered for the February half-term holiday.

Lateral Flow Testing for school staff

The government have rolled out lateral flow testing for all school staff and we will be starting next week. This is optional for staff but encouraged. These tests are not a replacement for the risk assessment, and all safety measures will remain as they are, but they will help to detect asymptomatic cases of COVID 19 amongst the staff reducing the risk of infection.

Staff will take a test twice a week at home. If the test is positive, then they will book a PCR test and self-isolate. If the lateral flow test is positive and there have been close contacts of staff or children, then we will need to inform you at very short notice that the bubble of children is closed until we hear back from the PCR test. If the PCR test is positive the close contacts will continue to self-isolate and if it is negative, then the close contacts can come back to school.

We are very aware that this form of last minute communication for working parents is far from ideal but there is no way round it. We will communicate with all those involved as quickly as possible.

Half Term

School will be closed to everyone over half term week (15th-19th February).

Keeping your child safe online

The following link gives you the top tips to keep you child safe on line:

http://d6vsczyu1rky0.cloudfront.net/38206_b/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Parent-Top-Tips-Safe-Online-Corona.pdf

Tik Tok

We often have concerns raised about Tik Tok, particularly inappropriate content. The rules on Tik Tok say it should only be used by those who are 13 and over, so none of our children should be accessing this. As a parent/carer, you are responsible for ensuring your child's online activity is safe and age appropriate. Whilst we do not support Tik Tok for use by our children, if you have decided to let your child access it, this guide to putting parental controls on it may be useful:

<https://www.pocket-lint.com/apps/news/151141-tiktok-family-safety-mode-how-the-app-s-parentalcontrols-work>

Other resources

The Tate Gallery

If your child enjoys art and learning about art, The Tate gallery have a youtube channel. They have art activities to do at home, films about the lives of famous artists and videos to help you learn about important art movements like pop art and surrealism. They are also on twitter @tate_kids

First news

@First_News is the UK's only newspaper for children. In lockdown, they are offering a weekly digital copy free for children. Just use the link below:

<https://subscribe.firstnews.co.uk/free-downloadable-issue/>

COVID resources for discussion and use with children

We know that it can be hard to know what to say to children about COVID. Therefore, here are some resources that might help. Please note you should read them yourself first as we are not recommending them, just giving them as a suggestion in response to requests.

Reassuring children who are worried about coronavirus: advice for parents and carers from the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families

http://d6vsczyu1rky0.cloudfront.net/38206_b/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Covid-advice-for-parents.pdf

Social story for having a COVID test for children with pictures

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57cff93c3e00beaa121daf64/t/5f809a426784f93899069637/1602263629298/Having+a+Coronavirus+test+social+story+-+home.pdf>

Social story for keeping safe in COVID

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57cff93c3e00beaa121daf64/t/5e6a3289560ee7338aa854f1/1584018183295/Coronavirus+Social+Story+%281%29.pdf>

Social story about COVID in a workbook

https://660919d3-b85b-43c3-a3ad3de6a9d37099.filesusr.com/ugd/64c685_0a595408de2e4bfcbf1539dcf6ba4b89.pdf

Link to COVID story in different languages

<https://www.mindheart.co/descargables?fbclid=IwAR1mdqJcpb2K1UUEBuiJCjjoAmt8VcuH1fm7HwBjTw0BDlI6pM0gkksJQ>

Support for children with anxiety in lockdown

We know that some parents are reporting their child is anxious over lockdown. This is understandable and there are ways to support them.

Pooky Knightsmith's youtube channel

Has LOTS of short videos for parent and pupils on anxiety and how to deal with it:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCouKr8JeXinK6v_nf5dWA1A

These workbooks may also help you to go through things with your child and have been used with children in our schools or recommended by therapists.

No worries – an activity book for children

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/No-Worries-Mindful-Kids-sometimes/dp/1787410870>

My hidden chimp – an activity book for children

https://www.amazon.co.uk/My-Hidden-Chimp-author-Paradox/dp/1787413713/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3SAP0BQEN4FRP&dchild=1&keywords=my+hidden+chimp+for%20+children&qid=1610720083&s=books&srefix=my+hidde%2Cstripbooks%2C250&sr=1-1

Starving the anxiety gremlin – for children aged 5-9

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Starving-Anxiety-Gremlin-Children-Aged/dp/1849054924/ref=pd_bxgy_img_3/261-2141693-0495230?encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=1849054924&pd_rd_r=b3d72c1d-2345-44ca-b6c8-2ce2826d6cd6&pd_rd_w=dawDO&pd_rd_wg=upS69&pf_rd_p=dcf35746-0212-418b-a148-30395d107b2d&pf_rd_r=PERXMHK61BSCTPZG528P&psc=1&refRID=PERXMHK61BSCTPZG528P

If you have concerns over your child's mental health, you can contact the following:

First Response

<https://www.nsfh.nhs.uk/Find-help/Pages/Help-in-a-Crisis.aspx>

0808 196 3494

This is an NSFT 24/7 crisis helpline offering immediate advice, support and signposting for people of all ages with mental health difficulties. They would be able to offer support to parents and carers about their worries etc.

We Are Undivided

Available to help teachers and families understand and support the wellbeing and mental health of young people. If you would like to learn about how this platform works, get more information about the portal visit www.weareundivided.com

This new platform is accessible for families, schools or alternative educators and is fully funded for young people in Reception to year 12 in Norfolk and Waveney.

Just One Norfolk

The NHS website www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk

Telephone 0300 300 0123 (You can ring this number for any concern over your child's health)

Alternatively, contact your GP.

Please remember, it is a sign of strength to ask for help if you need it. People and services are there to help you. We are also still here to help if there's anything we can help with, please email your child's school office.

I hope that you, your family and loved ones remain safe and well.



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The Nebula Federation