

St Joseph The Worker R C Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs Evelyn Clayton B.A.Hons QTS

12th January 2021

Dear Families,

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding regarding the difficult decisions that have been made last week. I know that some of you are disappointed that your children are unable to return.

On Friday 8th January the DFE updated their guidance once again for children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings. The new guidance states 'parents and carers who are critical workers **should keep their children at home if they can.**' If you are a critical worker who has been allocated a place in school and are in a position to **keep your child(ren) at home**, please do so. We will continue to do all we can to balance the needs of families, with the resources available to us.

In this letter, I would like to provide some reassurances relating to home learning. We understand that families have their own unique set of circumstances and challenges when trying to organise their daily commitments and support their children to learn at home. We aim to provide an inclusive approach that takes into consideration the pressures that our families face, whilst satisfying the demands placed on us by the Department of Education. Thank you to those who have returned the school survey sent out last week, it has helped to shape our school offer and inform us of the difficulties and challenges faced by yourselves at home.

We have held meetings throughout the week and have established some key priorities with regard to home learning:

1) Flexibility

We will issue a weekly schedule of work that parents can follow precisely if they so wish. If you are unable to start home learning until later in the day or decide to group work for later in the week, resources will remain available and families can establish their own routines.

2) Accessibility

In primary schools, computers are not the only answer to high quality home learning. Children take great pride in their exercise books; this is why we have sent exercise books home. The hope is that this will help them to focus and motivate them to produce the best work that they can. It is beneficial for pupils to engage in Seesaw/Tapestry and this can be accessed through mobile devices. The resources for lessons will be posted on Seesaw/Tapestry each day, but children can complete the work in their books. If resources cannot be accessed online, paper packs can be produced and collected from school.



3) Communication/Support

Staff are available via the school email system. However, if this is not an option, you can also request a call from a member of staff or contact our school office as normal.

Weekly Schedules

As discussed previously, these should be seen as a guide. They will be posted on Tapestry and Seesaw on a Monday morning. Resources will then be posted each day, and as mentioned previously, work will be completed in books/shared with the class teacher online. This should remove the need for the children to have access to a laptop at all times.

Finally, I accept that this way of learning is less than ideal, but we are in a pandemic. Offering a *mixture of online and practical activities, paper and handwritten work is the best we can offer. We have taken on board your feedback and recognise whilst online lessons would work for some families, it would not work for others due to digital devices being shared and family circumstances.*

We will continue to focus more attention on making our 'blended' offer work effectively over the coming weeks.

I do not expect things to run perfectly smoothly at first, but we will do the best we can to support all of our children.

Digital Support

A number of mobile and internet providers are offering free or increased data use to parents whom are home schooling. Free 4G Routers may also be available under qualifying criteria. If you are struggling with data costs or internet usage, please contact your network provider or the school office and we will try to signpost you to access this help.

Additional Support

We know that many families face hardship at this difficult economic time and if you do require support please contact the school office. Additionally, if your circumstances at home change and you feel additional help is needed with early help services, we are very experienced and knowledgeable in signposting to support agencies for you to access help if it is required. You can email the school confidentially for the attention of Mrs Clayton or Mrs Dunn who will be able to contact you.

Yours sincerely,

E Clayton
Acting Headteacher

