

Potter Street Academy News

Dear Parents / Carers

We have reached the end of our first week of remote learning. It has been very positive that so many children have been present and joined live teaching lessons with class teachers and this has gone very smoothly to date with only the odd technical issue. This is a huge achievement for our school community as we all grapple with using technology in a different way. I am sure you will join me in congratulating our teaching staff and also all the children who have engaged so well in these lessons in difficult circumstances.

Children in supervision rooms here at school have also accessed the live teaching lessons and are being provided with the same activities to complete as children are at home. Learning support assistants, pastoral staff, office staff, cleaning staff, teaching staff and our midday supervisors are looking after our vulnerable children and children of critical workers with care and commitment in the school building and continue to play an important role in supporting our school community.

Our supervision rooms have needed to be altered slightly due to the demand of places for children of critical workers and for vulnerable children. As from Monday, there will be an EYFS and Year 1 room, a year 2 and 3 room and a year 4, 5 and 6 room. We are at full capacity in these rooms now for the next two weeks on most days.

The Department for Education has recently stipulated that primary children should have about 3 hours of learning daily and we feel with the three 20 minute lessons each day, 20 minute follow up activities to complete and the other activities on the remote learning weekly plan, we have got the right balance for our children. The lessons introduce children to new skills so that they can continue to make progress in their learning, so it is really important that children join the live teaching lessons to ensure that they do not fall behind. Please can I remind parents and carers that lessons are recorded so if you are struggling to get more than one child to watch live teaching lessons and there are timetable clashes, the lessons can be accessed at a different time more suitable to cater for different family circumstances.

As a school we are asked by the DFE to monitor children's engagement with home learning and we will monitor this through parents sending in photos of learning activities completed via Tapestry or on Class Dojo.

Planning Times for Teachers

Friday afternoons have been dedicated for teachers to have their entitled PPA time so they will not be on call to respond to queries or messages at this time each week. This will mean that live teaching lessons are reduced from three to two on Fridays.

House Points

We will be continuing to reward children using our same rewards system that we use here in school. Teachers will award points which will be transferred to house points and as from next week, the star of the week award will be given out on a Friday. We feel it is important to continue to motivate children by continuing with these celebrations of showing good



attitudes towards learning whilst completing learning at home.

Reading at Home

We are aware that children will not have access to our school copies of reading books at this time, so class teachers will be reminding families how to access Oxford Owl for texts for our younger children and Epic Reads, for older children soon. Also, it is now possible to borrow e-books (for free) from Essex Libraries at: libraries.essex.gov.uk.

These books can be downloaded and read via a free app called Borrowbox (available from Google Play or the Apple Store) on phones, tablets, laptops and e-readers. If your child is already a member of the library, they will need their membership number (found on their card) and pin (which is their date of birth - ddmmyy). If your child is not a member, they can join temporarily online using the website above.

There is a good selection of texts for children of all ages, including books by favourite authors such as Roald Dahl and David Walliams.

Joe Wicks

Next week, we are aware that Joe Wicks will be restarting his exercise programme on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings live. These times do clash with a lot of live teaching lessons being delivered by teachers so if your child is keen to workout with Joe Wicks, please could they access this at a different point of the day.

Inset Day

The INSET day which was planned for 29th January has been postponed so 29th January 2021 will be a normal day - supervision rooms will be open on this day for children and teaching lessons will take place remotely.

Finally, just a quick reminder that if anyone in your house has symptoms or is waiting for

a test result, everyone must self-isolate. Please do not send children into our supervision rooms if you are unsure as this will impact on our ability to provide vital support to our Key Worker families.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend, please continue to take care of yourselves and your families.

