



Newsletter

26th January, 2021

Dear Parents,

I'm limiting how much information we send out to you so that it is easier for you to keep up with all the communications. For this reason, this letter will cover a range of things that I think you need to know about. Apologies as it is a long one!

We are in Week 4 of Lockdown Learning and everyone is doing an amazing job. Pupils at home and pupils at school are all trying their very best and we are so proud of them. We are very aware that home schooling is challenging and know this can be a cause for anxiety with parents. We want you to know that you can always get in touch with us if you need any additional support or need talking through something. All of our staff are in school every day either teaching online or supporting with the children we have in our critical worker bubbles.

BIG CAT ONLINE BOOKS



Next week you will be sent login details for your child to access Collins Big Cat Books. The teachers will be able to guide you to the suggested books for the children to read.

LATERAL FLOW TESTS

You may be aware that the government are introducing lateral flow tests for school staff and these will begin happening this week. All members of staff that opt into this process will do a home test twice a week. This will help us to contain any infections and hopefully avoid any additional disruption. It does mean that close contacts of a positive staff member would need to isolate too. We are hoping very much that we will not have to do this at all



MICROSOFT TEAMS

Thank you to everyone who is engaging with the "Live Learning on Microsoft Teams. I am sure you will agree the teachers are trying to make it as entertaining as possible.

If you have mislaid your login details please contact the school office and we will be able to re-issue it to you.



TURNING CAMERAS ON

You will have seen a letter sent out regarding the turning on of children's cameras. This has previously been a safeguarding measure. However, our primary staff really want to see the children they are teaching so we have had to measure the risk and put a plan in place. We are hoping for this to happen next week. I would like to just remind you that turning the camera on is not compulsory and if you feel more comfortable with it off- that is fine. However we recommend that if you are not happy with the camera on you stay with your child 'just in case' they click on the camera button!!



USING THE CHAT FUNCTION ON MICROSOFT TEAMS

I have been made aware that in some cases the 'chat' function on teams is being used inappropriately and would ask for you to remind your children that they use the chat bar to ask questions or answer questions. Just as in a real lesson, we would not expect children to be distracted or chatting. Any parent comments or concerns can be sent to the main office and should not be put onto a chat bar. This is for the children to use and is only for learning. I know the availability of emoji's and pictures is a temptation and we are still waiting to find out if we can remove those!





PHONE CALLS

You may have already received a phone call from us- and if not we should be getting to you this week. This is just a touch-base to ensure all is well with you and your family. Our teachers have loved getting in contact with you.



SEESAW:

Again thank you to everyone who is engaging with the Seesaw online learning.

Login details can be obtained from the school office.

SURVEY

Thank you so much for taking the time to complete the remote learning survey. This has given us some really good feedback which I am looking at with the Meon Infant School Staff. There are always things that are a matter of personal choice and we are not going to be able to fulfil everyone's personal preference but we can look at other ways to solve a problem. We had a number of parents who would like less provision... and a number of parents who would like more schoolwork! There were some excellent ideas on things we can do to support you even more. Below is a list of just some of the things we will be considering:

- Providing a crib sheet for phonics and other sessions to help with vocabulary
- More support and guidance on how to reply to seesaw feedback from the teacher
- Possible moving around of TEAMS sessions to support children who get tired by the end of the day
- Work for the day loaded up together as a package.

I'm not going to promise that these things can go ahead until I have spoken with all the staff and we have made professional decisions based on what would be better for your child and you. We also had lots of reassurance on the things that are going well:

- Structure of the day
- Good balance of seesaw and live 'Teams' sessions
- Feedback from teachers to parents
- Flexibility of work provided
- Amount and quality of work put onto teams

The other information we received from the survey evidenced that:

- 79% of parents were confident with Seesaw
- 91% of parents were confident with TEAMS
- 91% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that online learning met the needs of their child
- 93% of parents felt that the lesson length was just right for their child
- 98.2 of parent agreed or strongly agreed that communication was strong.

These results are very reassuring for us as converting to online education as swiftly as we did was incredibly nerve wracking and ambitious for staff and children but they have absolutely smashed it!

The data for children who engage well in online learning is 80.3% and this initially concerned us until we looked a bit deeper at some of the reasons behind this. In most cases, parents are reporting that children want to see their friends and actually want to be at school and this is why they are not engaged as well as they could be. We absolutely understand this and feel the same way! We cannot wait to have everyone back through our classroom doors when it is safe to do so.



USING FACEBOOK

I have tried to increase the amount of Facebook Posts we are putting out so that there is a continuous link between parents and school and hope that the content of these posts are helpful and informative. Again, I would welcome feedback on other things you might want to see on our Facebook page.



AND FINALLY:

I would like to say thank you so much to all our amazing parents, children and staff who have all been absolutely fantastic. I'd like to leave you with a quote I read from another headteacher and it really rang true to our brilliant school.

A school isn't a building, it's a culture. It's soul is the people in it, not the bricks around it. Nobody chooses a school because of the decor - they chose it because if the way it makes them feel, the sense of kindness and compassion it emits. You're part of that.

Kind Regards

Sonia Nickerson – Executive Head M3 Schools.

