



Friday 29th January 2021

LOCKDOWN 3 NEWSLETTER 3

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are glad to say that this week has been a calm week, if not a little icy at times. Well done to those of you who slid their way down the Maryville ice rink to bring your children to school. Many giggles were heard as 'Dancing on Ice' was unintentionally reenacted outside the school gates!

Special thanks most definitely go to Mrs Higgs this week; she always goes above and beyond to clear the ice on the school site and make it safe for us all to get on with the day. We know that you all appreciate her hard work, especially at the coldest time of the year.

HOME LEARNING

EYFS

All of the EYFS teachers are so impressed with all of your hard work at attempting the home learning ideas that we are sharing each day. It is really lovely for us to see your home learning achievements and we enjoy replying to you all. Keep it up - we know it is hard going and we will continue to try and always provide learning opportunities that are easy to set up at home. You are doing so well, so don't be hard on yourself if you don't attempt all of our suggestions. Do what you can, when you can. The mini zooms are still going great - please join one if you have not already had the chance to do so. The children can't help but make us all smile and there are also some funny moments due to the age and nature of young children! In one of our nursery zooms last week we had more pet dogs on screen than children at one point. The mini zooms help to boost everyone's mood - children, staff and parents/carers.

Mrs George

KS1 & 2

Whilst we see engagement levels grow across school, teachers and pastoral team members have been busy behind the scenes answering parental queries, solving technical hitches (of which there haven't been many) and encouraging learners to do their best.

This week, however, we have noticed some common anxieties growing amongst some of our teacher-parents out there. These include:

- **Independence** - is my child supposed to do the work on his/her own?
- **Motivation** - how can I get them started?
- **Confidence** - my child wants/needs reassurance all the time - are they like this in class?
- **Concentration** - how can I help them stick at it for longer?



- **Defiance** - why won't they just do their work?
- **Time** - how can I support my child/children when I'm working from home?

Please remember that teachers train for 3 years or more to learn the pedagogy and skills to be able to teach ten different subjects to 30 different pupils. We teach alongside colleagues who are experienced in their craft, in classrooms rich with technology and resources. Teachers can dedicate their whole day to the job of educating children. Children learn best alongside their peers, sharing the successes and challenges of learning with each other. They help and support each other more than you know. They make each other smile, boost each other's confidence and keep each other going.

You - as our army of home educators - can only make the best of the situation you are in.

We understand your concerns as many of us are going through the very same with our own children - sometimes at the same time as trying to upload work, feedback and motivate your children! Life is by no means easy for any of us.

Here are some tips that may help (depending on the age of your child):

- Check Google Classroom every morning for the day's activities. Read instructions with your child and check understanding.
- Perhaps allocate a different room in the house that is the learning zone, an alternative classroom. This obviously depends on how many little learners you have in the house!
- Activities can be completed in any order - maybe choose the one that will demand the most concentration first? Or maybe a task that will wake up your sleepy head?
- Activities can be completed at any time. We do not intend to teach online 'live lessons' and this is one of the reasons why. We want you to have the flexibility to plan home learning around the demands of your family. If you want to plan some 'school time' after 3.15pm, go ahead! You can design your own timetable!
- Activities have been set carefully by the teachers to fit with the expectations of the curriculum. However, teachers have also tried to plan tasks that most children can complete independently - especially the older children in school. In class, children would always be expected to 'have a go'.
- Joining a Zoom helps your child to feel connected. If you miss a Zoom - don't worry, just look out for the next Zoom link on Google Classroom.
- If your child completes only half of the task, hand it in anyway. If they leave some questions out because they don't understand, hand it in anyway. At least teachers can see what has been accomplished and maybe how to help next time.
- Balance screentime with practical activities. We have seen some fantastic music, art and PE tasks that have been photographed and handed in or shared on Twitter.
- Encourage siblings to help each other. Or don't if this would prove challenging!
- Encourage friends to chat to each other about their work - they may get a confidence boost from sharing their ideas.



- Take photos of the times when you share a book, go for a walk, bake a cake or play a board game. These are all learning moments that we would love to see, please share if you can.
- Don't turn learning into a battle. You are parents first and your relationship with your children is precious. We are here if you need us to have a chat with your child - to offer a little encouragement.
- Look after the wellbeing of your family. If your work demands take over, so be it. If your child is overwhelmed, leave the work behind and do something else they enjoy. Of course, we would like to see the majority of school tasks completed but if the day just isn't going to plan, that's fine. No problem.

SOME FURTHER GUIDANCE ABOUT HOME LEARNING:

- The DfE recommends that your child learns for approx 3-4 hours per day.
- Go to Google Classroom everyday. Read the task instructions and read again.
- KS1 are sending completed work back via the 'Hand in' button. KS2 have been asked to add screenshots of work to their own Google Slides presentation. This will enable you, your child and the teacher to access their work all in one place. We understand that some children are finding this hard to do at present. We will hopefully get any issues sorted next week. Use the 'Hand in' tool for now.
- Teachers will give feedback in different ways - either by comments on Google Classroom or on Google Slides (KS2). They may give whole class feedback on Zoom or on a pre-recorded video. **Please remember that teachers may not be able to feed back immediately or individually;** whilst we try our best, time and staffing may be limited for a variety of reasons.
- Please feel free to email or comment at any time - teachers will respond during the working day. Please do not expect replies during the evening or at weekends.
- Children can comment on the class stream; they can congratulate each other and ask their teacher questions. We want to avoid this stream being used for social chats as it is then difficult for the teachers to spot important messages.
- Weekly assembly videos will be posted to celebrate achievements and reflect on the week.
- Weekly Oracy Challenges will be posted on Twitter and Google Classroom for everyone to join in with.
- Keep reading! KS2 can discuss their progress on Accelerated Reader with Mrs Molloy on Google Classroom. Your child can show you their profile and targets on their iPad. Don't forget the myOn digital library of over 6000 books. Children can quiz on many of these books too. KS2 children have a target of reading for 30 minutes per day. Please try to encourage this at home. If you have a problem accessing books, please do ask.



ZOOM MEETING GUIDANCE

- Sometimes there may be technical hitches - don't worry about them. Let us know if you need help.
- Try to give your child some quiet space to listen and join in.
- Encourage your child to behave well whilst on the screen.
- Dress appropriately. No nightwear please.
- Zooms are for the purposes of connecting with your children. Please do not record them for your own social media feeds. Please respect our teachers' privacy.

KEY WORKER PROVISION

School-based children have once again come into schools with smiles and have worked hard in class. Whilst we recognise how difficult home learning can be - and how much our children enjoy school - we want to repeat the guidance: **if there is an adult at home, children should stay at home - even if you are working from home.**

- Please book your child's key worker place by 11am every Thursday for the following week. Should your requirement be the same days each week during this 3rd lockdown, then please let us know and we will try to avoid chasing you!
- Please notify, by email, any changes to your requirements.
- Please notify by email if your child is absent due to sickness. **If anyone in your family begins to feel unwell with COVID symptoms, please keep your child away from school.**
- On the days your child is at home, they should continue with their home learning as it progresses across the week.
- **Please bring iPads into school fully charged. This has been an issue in some classes this week.**
- Please remember to 'top up' your child's meal account if they are having a school dinner. Please advise by email if there are any changes to your child's usual meal choice. (We have not charged for school dinners this week, so your balances will remain the same.)
- If you require a Key Worker place, please email with the preferred days and proof of your key worker status and we will contact you to discuss further.
- The email address for any of the above is admin@prescotprimary.org.uk

For those of you who order school lunches, we hope that our kitchen team is back to full strength next week and lunch choices should return to normal. Thank you for your patience.

Fruit deliveries have resumed so your child will always have a choice of fresh fruit for their playtime snacks.



FOLLOW THE RULES

We have overheard a couple of children talking about visiting friend's houses or seeing their cousins during this period of lockdown. This of course, may be a memory from long ago or a complete misunderstanding but we would like to remind you that **we expect all families to follow the lockdown rules of staying at home unless it is for an essential reason.**

We do not expect to hear about children mixing with other families outside of school. This would clearly compromise the safety of our class bubbles and put staff and children at risk of transmission.

COMMUNICATION

This school year we have launched two new Apps, the **Arbor app and Parentapp**. We use both of these apps to communicate regularly with parents and carers, especially at the moment during these uncertain times. Currently we have 90% of parents/carers using the Arbor app and 77% of parents/carers using the Parentapp. If you have not downloaded the apps please check your emails as you will have received invitations for both. If you have changed your email address recently please contact the school office on admin@prescotprimary.org.uk and we can re send the invitations.

Did you know you can use our Apps to:-

- Report your child's absence
- Send us an in App message
- Pay for school dinners
- Book and pay for clubs
- Receive important/urgent communication

It is so important that we can communicate with all of our parents by the apps, as messages are received instantly. **Please sign up now!**

MASKS

As the transmission of COVID increases, we would like to offer our older children the choice of wearing a mask in school.

Children in Y5 and Y6 can **choose** to wear a mask but:

- It must be labelled with their name.
- It must be washed or changed daily.
- Children must be responsible for their own masks, eg, they must not leave it on desks, swap masks with others or lose them.
- We reserve the right to stop a child wearing a mask if the above conditions are not met.

We do believe the measures we have in place already are robust. This is an added option that we are introducing that is completely **OPTIONAL**.



OXFORD OWL BOOKS

Oxford Owl are selling many ebooks for 99p through their website with a link to Amazon. This runs until the middle of Feb. They offer all the popular authors. They also offer lots of their Reading Scheme books, such as Biff and Chip etc. for free. www.oxfordowl.co.uk

Towards the end of the week, we saw more blue sky and heard many more birds in the trees. We have been cheered also by our children, who continue to amaze us.

Thank you to the Naylor sisters for their lovely homemade cards sent to us through the post. We know they are sending positive messages across their community too.

Thank you to all of Y2's jesters who brought colour and laughter to school this week - especially when a Mummy & Daddy jester joined in at home!

Thank you to Y5's pyramid builders. We love your ingenuity!

Well done to all of the EYFS' treasure hunters - we loved watching you have so much fun.

Well done to the musicians who have been impressing Mr Brown with your keyboard practice at home - we have forwarded your messages on.

Thank you to Y4's pop stars! Your instructional videos on 'How to be a pop star' have impressed us all.

Well done to all of our Y1 'Read Write Inc students, still learning even at home.

Thank you to Y6 who showed off their lovely pets in Thursday's Zoom. What a collection!

And Y3 - we can't wait to see your Stone Age arts & crafts!

Children really are our inspiration and therapy.

Enjoy a weekend away from the 'classroom'.

Thank you for your extraordinary efforts and kind words.

Kindest regards,

Mr George and Mrs Seddon

Headteacher - Mr S.George
PRESCOT COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL
MARYVILLE ROAD PRESCOT MERSEYSIDE L34 2TA



T: 0151 432 7100 E: admin@prescotprimary.org.uk W: www.prescotprimary.org.uk T:
@prescotprimary