



## Bicton C of E Primary School and Nursery

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Head teacher: Mrs Natalie Johnson BA (Hons)

25<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents

Firstly, we want to say thank you for your support and understanding during this first week of school closure. We have really missed the children and it has been lovely to receive your emails with questions, messages of support or just to let us know what you have been doing.

All of us – staff, parents and children – are having to get used to a change in our daily routines and ways of working that we have never experienced before. Home learning is a new experience for everyone and we know that there really isn't a 'one size fits all' approach.

Over the page, we have included some guidance to help you support your child at home. Please use what is helpful to you and your family and don't think this is what you have to do – it's there as a suggestion and you might have already found other things that are working well for you. We are just grateful for whatever you are able to do to support your child.

From Monday 30<sup>th</sup> onwards, we will not be able to provide printed copies of the home-learning activities for parents to collect from school. Children can record their work in the exercise book, which they were given last week or on paper.

Home learning activities will be published in the class pages of the website every Monday morning. The learning projects will include English and Maths activities and links, as well as themed project ideas. Every class will have the same weekly theme which will enable children in different classes to share in project work together. Work will continue to be set over the Easter holidays.

Moving forward, and if school closures continue for an extended period of time, we will consider introducing an online learning platform and this will be shared with you when the time comes.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's wellbeing or you need support as a parent, please email me (Mrs Johnson) directly and I will get back to you as quickly as I can. Please continue to use the class email addresses to contact teachers during school hours e.g. for log-in reminders.

Please look after yourselves and stay safe and well.

Kindest regards

Mrs Johnson and staff

## How to support home learning

You may want to use this guidance to help create a positive learning environment at home:

### Be realistic about what you can do

**You're not expected to become teachers** and your children aren't expected to learn as they do in school. Simply **providing your children with some structure** at home will help them to adapt. Use the tips below to help you make this work for your household.

**Experiment** in this first week, then **take stock**. What's working and what isn't? Ask your children and involve them too.

**Share the load if there are 2 parents at home**. Split the day into 2-3 hour slots and take turns so you can do your own work.

**Take care of your own health and wellbeing**. This will be new for your entire household, so give it time to settle. Take a look at the links below for some advice on mental health and wellbeing.

➤ [Coronavirus and your wellbeing](#) – Mind.org

➤ [Supporting young people's mental health during this period](#) – Anna Freud Centre

### Keep to a timetable wherever possible

**Create and stick to a routine** if you can. This is what children are used to. For example, eat breakfast at the same time and make sure they're dressed before starting the 'school' day – avoid staying in pyjamas!

**Involve your children in setting the timetable** where possible. It's a great opportunity for them to manage their own time better and it'll give them ownership.

**Check in with your children and try to keep to the timetable, but be flexible**. If a task/activity is going well or they want more time, let it extend where possible.

If you have more than 1 child at home, **consider combining their timetables**. For example, they might exercise and do maths together – see what works for your household.

**Designate a working space if possible**, and at the end of the day have a clear cut-off to signal school time is over.

**Stick the timetable up on the wall** so everyone knows what they should be doing when, and tick activities off throughout the day.

**Distinguish between weekdays and weekends**, to separate school life and home life.

### Make time for exercise and breaks throughout the day

**Start each morning with a [PE lesson](#)** at 9am with Joe Wicks – we have been doing this in school with key workers' children and it's a great start to the day!

If you have a **garden, use it regularly**. If you don't, try to get out **once a day** as permitted by the government (households can be together outdoors but 2 metres apart from others.)

Get your children to **write in a diary what they did each day** – this can be a clear sign that the 'school' day has ended.

### Other activities to keep children engaged throughout the day

Where you have more freedom in the timetable, **make time for other activities**. Add some creative time or watch a dance video from [Go Noodle](#) to get the heart-rate going.

Get your children to **write postcards** to their grandparents, other relatives or neighbours who you know are not able to leave the house.

Ask **grandparents to listen to your children read** on FaceTime or Skype (or ask grandparents to read to younger children.) If you are not able to do anything else, we cannot emphasise enough the need for all children to read as much as possible.

**Give children chores** to do so they feel more responsible about the daily routine at home. Ask them to **help you cook** and bake.

Accept that **they'll probably watch more TV / spend time on their phone** – that's perfectly ok but you might want to set / agree some screen time limits