



Bicton C of E Primary School and Nursery

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Friday 29th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to say a huge thank you for all your support over the past 4 weeks – for your emails, cards, photos, videos and, most importantly, for working in partnership with us to provide the best possible education for your child whether they are learning remotely at home or still attending school/nursery.

There is no denying that this has been a tough few weeks, let alone months, for everyone and I could not ask more from our staff or our Bicton families. I can only begin to imagine what it must be like trying to support your child at home but I want you to know that you are doing an amazing job and I genuinely mean that. Remote learning has been a steep learning curve for everyone – children, parents and staff – and I could not be prouder of what our school community has achieved in such a short space of time.

I know there will be good days at home, where everything seems to go swimmingly well. There will also be challenging days where you or your child will be in tears of frustration and just feeling that you have had enough. On days like that, I want you and your child to cut yourselves some slack and know that it's ok to turn the screen off, put the school work away and just go and do something for you. Even better still, just 'do nothing' and take the time out that you need. Please do not compare yourself to what you hear other parents are doing. Every family is facing different challenges and everyone will have days where nothing seems to be going right or things seem harder than the day before.

We now know that there will be several more weeks at least before schools can consider welcoming more children back and it is important that you all look after yourselves. This goes for our staff as well who are working incredibly long hours and they cannot work any harder. Many of them are juggling childcare issues because, just like you, they are trying to keep their loved ones safe. They cannot risk their child going to grandparents to their childcare bubble or their child's school is not running wraparound care. Staff get home from school and they start again, often trying to support their own child with home learning, as their child's school cannot offer them a critical worker place every day. I hope you will appreciate why I am saying this and I feel it is important to remember that we are all in this together.

With all of this in mind, from next week, we are introducing 'Wellbeing Wednesday'. Online technology has allowed us to keep in touch with all of our families at home and continue to provide education, but we all need to take a break from it when we can. Every Wednesday afternoon, there will be no live lessons. Neither will there be tasks that involve children or staff looking at a screen. Instead, we will be suggesting a range of activities that focus on wellbeing and keeping everyone's minds and bodies healthy.

As I mentioned last week, I would be grateful if you could spare a few minutes to complete a short survey about our remote learning provision. Before you do though, I would ask you to think about what I have just said. Yes of course we want to know what you are struggling with, and we will continue to do whatever we can to support you. However, just as importantly, we want to know what is working well for you and your child and things that we are doing successfully. The news, social media, and, sadly too often, the government briefings are quick to criticise schools. Just like all of you, we are doing the very best we can in the most challenging of circumstances and we can get through the next few weeks if we work together.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I think you are all amazing and I cannot stress that enough!
Take care and stay safe

Mrs Johnson x