Friday 14th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this update finds you well. As we end a full week of Remote Learning, I thought it would be useful to reflect on the past week and feedback some top tips and requests from the teaching staff. It has been fantastic to see the very high attendance of pupils joining Zoom meetings with their teachers.

As highlighted in my previous newsletter, these Zoom meetings are very different to the previous meetings held in the March lockdown. During these meetings, the teachers will be teaching specific learning objectives and it is important that the children are in the correct environment to be able to access this learning effectively. This is incredibly hard for young children in particular as being in a classroom is a more manageable environment for the teacher. Therefore, we are asking for your support to enable the teachers to teach through their devices so that the best possible outcomes can be achieved.

**What can you do to help?**

* Please try and make sure that your child is in the waiting room **5** minutes before the meeting starts so that the teacher can enter the children all at the same time and get started straight away.
* Please enter your child’s name when entering the Zoom meeting rather than the name of the device or parent so that the teachers can be sure they are only letting their class members into the meeting.
* Please keep the microphone **off** unless your child has been asked a direct question. Please be aware that everybody within the meeting can hear conversations or background noise when the microphone is on.
* Please try not to repeat what the teacher has said with your microphone on as this slows down the lesson and interrupts other children’s learning.
* Encourage your child to work as independently as possible. It is important that there is some supervision with technology involved but this could be as much as somebody else being in the room. KS2 children should be able to access the lesson without an adult sitting by their side.
* Remember that your children are used to answering questions and working in front of their classmates but not in front of their classmates parents or their own parents so please consider this when you supervise your child at the screen and stand back as much as you can.
* Do not answer questions for your child or think you are helping by giving them the answer. Your child’s teacher needs to know if the children have understood the learning intention and this is their way of checking.
* Century activities for Key Stage 2 children are not optional so please encourage your children to complete the tasks set.
* Please remember that the class teacher is only available through email within school hours (**9am – 3.30pm**). Also remember some of our teachers have their own children which they are home schooling too so may not get back to you immediately.
* Please make note of working days for part-time teachers:
	+ Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday – Mrs Holmes and Mrs Lewis
	+ Thursday, Friday – Mrs Wilsdon and Mrs Herman
	+ Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, – Mrs Burnside (SENCo)
* Please support the teachers with reminding your children of Zoom etiquette. Children that interrupt other children’s learning will be reminded of the rules and parents may be contacted if these rules are not followed. If inappropriate or disruptive behaviour continues the child may have their microphone and camera turned off.
* Children are not permitted to use the chat room whist in lessons – teachers will attempt to turn this function off.

**Developments moving forward**

* From Monday, all EYFS and KS1 parents will have access to Tapestry. This will make communication and feedback to children easier and quicker.
* Extra Zoom meetings may be sent to you by your class teacher. These meetings could be for intervention sessions or optional sessions for different subjects.
* Miss Clarke will be setting a weekly Art and Craft challenge for all children to participate in if they would like to.

**Miss Clarke’s Art Club**

*Virtual Art Club is coming to you on a poster, via email, next week! Art Club is open to our whole school community, young and old so dust off your pencils and get your fingers flexing. Every Wednesday a new creative challenge will be introduced, with suggestions of materials to use and top tips to get you started. I’m very much hoping to celebrate all of your work by putting on an exhibition in school. Please keep everything super safe until then. In the meantime, you can send photographs of your work to Mrs Sarbutts (**office@oldstratford.northants.sch.co.uk**) who will be putting together an online gallery for us all to enjoy. Virtual Art Club’s first challenge requires a clean jam jar or small glass. Please could you also save any small box lids or tin foil takeaway trays (cleaned) for the future. I can’t wait to see your wonderful creations over the next few weeks.*

*Keep safe and keep drawing!*

*Miss Clarke*

I understand that for some parents Remote Learning is extremely difficult. Some of you are juggling jobs and working from home at the same time as trying to make sure that your children do not fall back in their learning. Although I ask you to do as much as you can, it is more important that you as parents do not become stressed and anxious of the prospect of your child not getting what they need educationally. From experience, it is this week coming up that reality sets in and you come to realise that some things are not going to be sustainable no matter how hard you try. So please do what is best for you and your family.

It was inevitable that after the March lockdown that children returning to us would have gaps in their learning but after a hard working Autumn Term of planned intervention, the children were able to catch up. We did it then and we will do it again so please do what you can and contact the school or your child’s class teacher for support if needed.

We welcome Miss Slater to our team this term. Miss Slater is in her final teaching placement before she qualifies in the summer and will be working with Mrs Wilkins in Year 1. It must be a very strange time to be training to be a teacher but we are hoping that we can give her as many opportunities with hands on teaching as possible (even if it is remotely).

I hope you all have a lovely weekend and some valuable family time away from a screen!

Take care,

Mrs Sarbutts